The Infinite Loops - Sly Cooper

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Based off of Innortal's Loops as well as Saphroneth's own sets, welcome to the Loops that never end! Sly wakes up one day to find that time has started Looping. A collaboration between me and various members of the Spacebattles Forums.

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Compilation Set 1

It was funny, but waking up in modern day Paris had not been something that Sly Cooper had expected, since he had last gone to sleep in Ancient Egypt. In fact, it wasn't just modern day Paris either. It was the gang's old Paris Hideout, 3 days before the Police HQ job was set to be pulled.

He wasn't quite sure if this was a dream or not. Then again, how could he be sure that Egypt wasn't the dream and this wasn't the real world?

A knock on his door quickly derailed his train of thought. It was Bentley.

"Sly, are you up yet? Come on, we've got surveillance to do."

"Yeah, just give me a minute." Sly answered, getting up and throwing on his jersey. This just had to be some kind of dream. Any minute now he'd wake up in Egypt, probably with sand in his shoes.

"I'm coming in Sly, I can give you a run-down of what we need while you get ready." Bentley said, opening the door and walking in.

Wait… *walking in* ?

Rubbing his eyes, Sly got a clearer look at Bentley. No wheelchair. He was actually walking.

Losing his balance and falling to the floor, the impact must've gotten Sly's cane to fall over and konk him right on the head. He shook his head. Still the Paris Hideout.

That cleared it up at least. This wasn't a dream. This was real.

Trying to make some sense of that dream, he went through the whole Fiendish Five ordeal again, with a couple of changes during the assault on Clockwerk's volcano base to make things easier. Some pre-emptive hacking from Bentley allowed Sly to rescue Carmelita without the gas trap triggering, and a quick bit of foresight (or was it hindsight?) allowed Sly to avoid losing his cane soon after. On the way up he'd also managed to avoid breaking too much of the structure, with Carmelita on the Binocu-Com and waiting in the same position as the first go around.

"Look Ringtail," Carmelita said as she waited at the little outcropping that overlooked the power source for Clockwerk's Death Ray, "Why am I waiting here again?"

"You got here by jetpack, right Inspector Fox?" Sly replied, waiting for the answer he knew was coming.

"Yeah, I did. I never mentioned that, so how did you know?"

"Call it thief's intuition. We had to work to be able to get in from the ground, despite Bentley working out that an aerial approach was easier. It's at the top of that Death Ray, right?" He explained.

"…Yeah, they captured me and stuffed me in that gas trap as I landed, it should still be there. Why do you ask?"

"Because it's going to take the both of us to bring down Clockwerk. You from the ground, me from the air."

"What? What makes you think that'll work?" Carmelita asked, stunned. Where had Sly gotten his intel?

"Perhaps I can explain, Carmelita. Sly's been better than usual recently. He knew where each of the other Fiendish Five members before reading that file we took from Police HQ, and he was the one planning each attack on them. Kind of made me feel a little left out."

"Sorry Bentley, I guess you could call it Déjà vu, but I feel like I've done all this before. It's like I remember being in a volcano, scrambling to get to the top of that thing while it started to sink." Sly explained, "Basically I figured all that stuff I passed by just now was what was keeping the Death Ray in place. Once I grab the Jetpack, Carmelita can start destroying the equipment with her pistol and then it's 'Bye Bye Death Ray'."

"Well whatever's the cause, it's really helped us out. Half of the stuff that we'd been dealing with could've been the end for us." Bentley replied, "Still, I don't think it's going to help when we need to fight Clockwerk proper."

"I'm inclined to agree with Bentley, Sly." Carmelita added, "I mean, couldn't all this be some kind of trick?"

"Tell you what, if my plan works, we'll sit down and try to work this out afterwards. I'm making the run for the Jetpack." Sly answered, disconnecting from the call.

The plan had gone smoothly, for the most part. One of the advantages of trying to climb the Death Ray as it was sinking was that it wasn't in the way during the battle with Clockwerk. Half the time he was having to manoeuvre around the darn thing as it sunk, all while dodging energy blasts from a giant mechanical owl.

One stray shot caught a part of the Death Ray, sending a part falling onto Sly, knocking him out of the sky and into the lava below.

It was then that the strangest thing happened.

He woke up again, back at the Paris Hideout.

"OK, that was no dream. I *died* . How'd I get back here?"

"Alright, so whatever's going on, I'm stuck in some sort of time loop." Sly said to himself as he explored the back alleys of Mesa City, Utah. Like last time, he had wound up back at the Cooper Gang's Paris Hideout, just prior to going after the Fiendish Five and reclaiming the Thievious Raccoonus.

He'd already beaten Raleigh and gotten the pages that were in his base, but something must've scared Muggshot because there looked to be more guards around Mesa City.

Nothing too difficult mind you, four major adventures and one repeat of his first one had done much to sharpen his skills. With a grin, he spotted the area's vault and went to unlock it. One more section of the family heirloom taken back.

Back here again. The Krack-Karov Volcano and Clockwerk's fortress. If memory served, letting the structure for Clockwerk's Death Ray sink into the lava before climbing it had made getting to the top a pain in the neck. Getting it to start sinking after getting to the top meant a stray shot ultimately gave him a lava-bath and a restart. Maybe taking a slightly different approach this time would prove useful.

"Hey Carmelita you know that stuff that I passed by to get to this point?" He asked, already knowing the answer.

"Yeah, what about it?" Carmelita replied, a little confused.

"What're you getting at Sly?" Bentley asked, before a flash of realization struck. "Wait, you think that equipment might be-"

"Connected to that Death Ray of his, I wouldn't be surprised. Something that big has got to take up a lot of power, right?" Sly replied, grinning.

"Well yeah, it would. The design of the thing means that it's probably part of a larger whole too. OH! I gotcha! Carmelita, that equipment

that Sly passed by may be the power supply for the Death Ray! If you take that out, it shouldn't be able to fire, and whatever's keeping it standing might just give out too."

"Seriously? You want me to destroy it then?" Carmelita replied.

"Yeah, sounds like that'd do the trick. Just give me a couple of minutes to start climbing, and then start firing. Something tells me that messing with this is going to get that owl's attention." Sly explained.

"Wait, why do you want to climb it?!" Murray asked, entering the conversation.

"I'll get to that. Carmelita, we had to rig something up to get in from the ground, and Bentley said that there was only one route to get in that way. How'd you get here?" Sly asked.

"I got into the fortress using a Jetpack. I ended up on top… of the Death Ray. Cooper, did you know that my Jetpack was there?" She asked, shocked.

"I'm looking at the structure now and I think I can see it. Two red tanks and a couple of attached guns, right?"

"Yeah, that's right. You must be able to see it then. You're planning to fight Clockwerk in the air, aren't you?" She asked. There were a lot of questions being raised.

"Yeah, and given the power on your Shock Pistol, I think using the jetpack's guns and your pistol may be the key to bringing him down. I just need to get to that jetpack first." Sly explained. It did feel a bit better to be letting them work it out. Couple of nudges in the right direction were all that was needed.

"Got it. Let me know when I should open fire Ringtail." Carmelita replied, "and be careful."

"I will be. Right then everyone, I'm starting the run for the jetpack." Sly said, getting ready to run.

"Go for it Sly!" shouted Murray.

"We're counting on you!" Bentley added.

"Thanks guys. Stay safe, all of you. I'm going!" Sly said as he cut the Binocu-Com connection.

Turned out that waiting until he was partway up was the perfect alternative to his previous attempts. He wasn't stuck a few feet above molten lava and during the battle with Clockwerk, nothing had really gotten in the way, meaning that the battle was a rousing success.

All that was left to do was to knock Clockwerk's block off directly to disable the Auto-Repair and thing's would be golden.

"Cooper! You will never be rid of me! Clockwerk is superior!" The owl declared as the last strike from Sly's cane finally dislodged the head, disabling the Auto-Repair circuitry. Clockwerk was done.

"You may be superior, and you may be eternal, but there's one last thing that you are too. You're a pile of scrap metal."

A couple of years had passed since then and no looping had occurred. Sly wasn't too sure if it was just a one-time thing, or if something had to happen to trigger it. He brushed it aside though when Clockwerk's body had been recovered and put in a museum, as expected. Like before, it was the Klaww Gang that had taken them, and just like last time, the final battle was against Neyla who had merged with the Clockwerk body parts to become Clock-La.

There was one major difference though that had made for a happier ending to the adventure though.

"WE DID IT! WE GOT THE HATE CHIP!" Bentley cheered, before Sly quickly pulled him out from Clock-La's beak, just as it slammed down. The first go around, Sly wasn't so close to them and as a result, the beak had slammed shut on Bentley's legs, crippling him from then on.

This time though? Well, Sly had stuck close to them and managed to pull Bentley out of there in time, preventing his legs from getting crushed.

"Careful there Bentley. You were almost snapped up there, buddy." Sly said, relieved. Hopefully this meant that things would go a little smoother from then on.

With Bentley having avoided injury, Murray never left the gang and that made some things go smoother when it came to setting up for the Cooper Vault heist. There were a few things that required them to go back to Italy though.

After all, it was during the job to convince Murray to come back that Sly had run into his former foe Dimitri. If Sly hadn't let Dimitri go when he did, he'd have no way of getting to Blood Bath Bay where he had joined the gang.

Cue running into Dimitri again during the ACES tournament in Holland, and owing him a favour as thanks for his help. That favour got called in at about the same time as it had before, Blood Bath Bay and recovering the diving gear that had been stolen from Dimitri's grandfather. Once that had been resolved, things had progressed more or less as they had done before. Faked amnesia thanks to the Dr M showdown, LeParadox, and Time Travel.

It had gone a little too closely to the original path though for Sly's liking, and once again he was stuck in ancient Egypt. At least he had given Carmelita a clue, now he just needed something specific to send them.

1.3

Well, this was certainly a change of pace.

It turned out that not all of these Loops (Sly had probably gone through a little more than 40 or so by now if his count was right) had the same circumstances.

"So Boss, how're we going to go about this? We need to lure Rajan out of hiding." Said the cigar smoking tiger that was now apparently the muscle of the gang.

"Jeff, we've got the blueprints to his spice operation. It needs a lot of water to keep the system running efficiently," was the response from the Dutch mouse that was now their tech specialist. "If we can open the floodgates as it were…"

"Then Rajan's operation goes under." Sly finished.

Apparently in this version of events, Bentley and Murray at the orphanage had been replaced by a young El Jefe (now Jeff) and Penelope. He didn't know it yet, but one Green Baron would eventually join his ranks, and a warmongering Hippo would be the first major enemy he faced on his trip through time.

1.4 (Thanks to Valentine Meikin)

Sly picked up part of Slytunkhamen's treasure, satisfied that it would be from the right era, before he put it in his pocket. "That'll work..." He muttered, careful to not let the rest of the gang hear him.

Several weeks later, shortly after Sly's apparent demise, Bentley frowned as he noticed a ancient egyptian ankh sat on a piece of

paper. "Dear Bentley, I need you to do something, Sly...?" He read, reading the piece of paper.

A short time later, Carmelita was looking very annoyed as she was dumped in Ancient Egypt, Sly's gang having left, tossing the ankh they'd used at her feet, as soon as they dropped her off. As she was about to yell at where they were, she was tapped on the shoulder by a familiar cane.

"Ringtail?!" She exclaimed, for him to nod, "Care to explain?"

When he found himself back at the beginning of this time loop, he had a grin that just wouldn't go away on his face. Yes, he'd strand them both in Ancient Egypt a few more times if he could. Well, He'd spent long enough in that era to know that, as far as anyone knew, Slytunkhamen appeared out of nowhere...

1.5 (Thanks to Valentine Meikin)

Sly frowned. Something was going on. He'd woke up, as usual, with the break-in at Police HQ, to find, first, that the safe code had been changed. It was now 3150, and someone had etched 'BC' into the right-hand side of the lock. "Bentley, Cross-reference 3150 BC with, well, anything," Sly asked.

"3150 BC was considered the year that what we consider as Ancient Egypt first came to be..." Bentley exclaimed, "I didn't know Carmelita was into ancient history..."

"Me either..." Sly muttered. Especially not ancient history that he got stranded in whatever he did.

Carmelita contemplated not shooting Sly for breaking into her office. She knew why he was doing it, she had read the book once or twice herself, but it was still breaking and entering. Now she just needed to

work out why she was repeating this particular break-in again and again...

1.6

"So, I'm the inspector now?" Sly asked himself, a little surprised. Unlike last time, he hadn't woken up at the Paris HQ, in fact he'd just come to on the rooftop where Carmelita usually appeared on the night of the heist. Looking himself over he had a Cooper Cane in the form of a nightstick and some weird looking handcuff-pistol thing that was locked onto his wrist.

"Huh. I guess this is my answer to Inspector Fox's shock pistol."

Then the memories came in. He still couldn't work out why that happened, but apparently in this version of events he came from a long line of law enforcers, and his primary foe was Carmelita Fox, master thief, and the latest in a family line of lawbreakers.

"If only she could see me now. She'd probably bust a gut laughing."

Sure enough, Carmelita tried to grab the Fiendish Five file (funnily enough, she had an answer to Sly's cane, albeit the crook was a stylised F instead of a C). Sly figured that he may as well play along.

"Where do you think you're going, Miss Fox?" He asked, readying his handcuff launcher.

"Sorry Inspector, but I need this file for the score of the century. I hope you don't mind me borrowing it." Carmelita replied with a grin.

"Sorry to burst your bubble, but you know I'm going to have to try and stop you," Sly answered, "and this handcuff launcher'll do just that."

"That looks pretty cool, but I'm not that big into jewellery. Well, wearing it at least." She replied, "Anyway, I'll be taking my leave, so see you around, Cooper!" She added, bolting for her escape route.

It had been an interesting experience, being the one behind the badge, he had to admit. Being the one to actually lock up the Fiendish Five was something that Sly enjoyed immensely, but when it came to the Klaww Gang incident, he knew what was coming. When Neyla had gotten him arrested, he had been put into the same predicament as Carmelita had been in. Of course, she had come through and rescued him from the Contessa, just as he had done for her so many times before.

Then the stuff with Clock-La came around again. No matter which side of the badge he was on, it still pained him to see Bentley crippled. Carmelita agreed to turn herself in quietly on the grounds that Bentley and Murray would be allowed to walk, and he had no real intent to argue with that.

On the chopper...

"I see why you do this, Cooper, it's actually pretty fun." Carmelita said with a grin, "So tell me, how long have you been repeating things?"

"What?! You know about that?!" Sly asked, stunned.

"Remember when we saved you from the Contessa? You were a little out of it. I believe your first words were 'How can Inspector Fox get right back to work after going through that?'" She explained, "That's when I realised that this was happening to you too. To be honest I thought you'd have worked it out after that Egypt code on my safe, or at least realised that something was up."

"It caught me out, but that was a long time ago for me. I've been doing this for a long time."

"Right, well, at least neither of us is going through this alone anymore, takes some of the repetitiveness out of it." She replied.

"It does, a bit. But let me get this straight. Someone like you, with such a black and white view of justice, actually enjoys being a criminal?" Sly asked, intrigued.

"Well after however many reruns of events from the same role, it gets boring you know? I figured that if I was the thief, may as well have fun with it and break the boredom a little." Carmelita replied.

"Well then, who am I to keep you here? You know what happens here, so shall we continue this game of cat and mouse another day?"

"It'll be my pleasure." She answered, revealing that she had gotten out of her handcuffs and grabbing her cane. "I'll see you next time, Ringtail." She added, making her escape.

"Bring it on, Ms. Fox." Sly replied with a grin. "I'll catch you one of these days."

This was going to be fun.

1.7 (Valentine Meikin)

For Carmelita, this was an odd situation. She had got herself stranded in ancient Egypt, instead of Sly, because it had been one of the loops where she had been the criminal instead of him. She was surprised, then, to see Sly walk over to her with a pair of drinks, wearing nothing but a pair of trunks.

"Ringtail?" Carmelita asked, "How did you?"

"This happens the same way every time, whoever is the enemy..." Sly offered, "I actually came here for a different reason..."

He then got down on one knee, getting out a ring box, and opening it.

"Carmelita Montoya Fox, Will you be my wife?" He asked, "Not just for this loop, not just for now, but..."

When Sly approached Carmelita's office the following loop, he was surprised to notice, as well as the safe reading 3150, the door for her office read 'Carmelita M. Cooper', a certain ring catching the light caused by the searchlights and that she had the nightstick 'cane' that he had when he was in her place.

Oddly, he somehow avoided Egypt that time round, helped by the fact that, instead of him going straight due to 'amnesia', Carmelita quit the force due to issues with corruption in the force stemming from his second caper, and was able to plan a way to defeat Paradox without Sly being at Ground Zero.

It felt so right, Sly and Carmelita Cooper, co-leaders of the Cooper Gang...

What.

Waking up at the start of a Loop more often than not landed Sly in one of two roles, either a thief or an Interpol agent.

This one wasn't the Interpol one, but the part that was a bigger surprise was that he wasn't even a raccoon this time. Ever since he and Carmelita had discovered that they were both experiencing these Loops, they had been sure to keep track of a lot of things, namely the fact that while for Carmelita, Loops were one after the other, like clockwork (not the owl), for Sly, those same Loops that Carmelita was aware of could have any number of other Loops between them where she wasn't aware of the previous takes. When they discovered that, Sly made sure to keep a count of how many Loops he went through before the next one for Carmelita, that way they'd be able to pick up wherever they'd left off. The memory thing

was handy as well. According to the ones he'd gotten this time, he was a drifter, just arriving into a place called Empire City. He'd almost tripped because he came to mid-stride. Looking into a shop window, he got a better look at himself.

For the most part, his normal look had stuck with him. The same hat, jacket, boots and backpack, and his usually bare legs were now clad in a pair of jeans that were the same grey as his fur was back home. No cane though, that was a little disheartening.

"Huh, so this is what a human looks like. Weird." Sly muttered to himself as he examined himself.

"Sounds like you've never been human before," said a voice from behind him "Lemme guess; does the word Loop have any special meanin' to ya?"

Turning around, Sly got a look at the person talking to him. He had black hair, a yellow shirt under a black jacket, light grey jeans and black sneakers, finished off by a pair of black lens, gold rimmed sunglasses.

"The name's Zeke, Zeke Dunbar." Zeke added, offering a handshake.

"Sly Cooper." Sly replied, taking him up on the offer. "It does have a bit of significance, yeah. Never seen anything like this though."

"Sounds like you and me got somethin' in common, Sly." Zeke said, "So, Anchor or Looper?"

"You lost me."

"Do you catch on to all the Loops, or just a few of 'em?" Zeke clarified.

"Ah, right. I know about all of them. Carmelita's the second one." Sly answered.

"Nice, so that means you're an Anchor like me, and yer friend's just a standard Looper. First thing's first though. Welcome to the Multiverse, Sly. Looks like I'm the one who's got the job of explainin' all this to ya. I don't get that all too often, gotta say." Zeke said with a slight pout. "I'm none too good at this part. You'd have probably been better off bumpin' into one of the original seven, or maybe Twilight or Hiccup, those nine are much better at it. They got presentations ready to go for this sort of thing. Come on, we've got a week before the big event here in Empire City, so I'll give ya the rundown on what's happening, and a heads up on what sort of things you and yer friend can do now that you're both Looping."

1.8 Extended (DrTempo)

Carmelita Fox-Cooper was confused.

First, she and her husband were in a time loop. Now, they were in a place where everyone looked like hairless apes. Apparently, she was part of the Empire City police force here.

While her husband explored wherever they were, Carmelita went to her work. And now, she had encountered an odd rabbit-like thing, who wanted to make a 'contract' with her, and grant a wish. Carmelita wasn't stupid, but this was odd even by her standards.

And then a girl with red and yellow streaked hair appeared out of nowhere. "Got you, Kyubey!" The rabbit-thing tried to speak, but the girl summoned an odd-looking sword, and tried to slice the thing in half, only getting its ears. The girl growled. "Get back here, you menace to Loopers..."

Before the girl could give chase, Carmelita removed her gun, and tried to fire. The girl turned around, grabbed the gun, and slammed Carmelita to the floor, saying, "No time for this."

After looking around, the girl cursed. "Dumb thing got away. For NOW." Carmelita went for her gun, but the girl made a gesture with her hand, and the gun just flew to her. The girl then relaxed, and said, "I suppose you want answers." Carmelita nodded. The girl said, "First things first. What's your name?"

"Inspector Carmelita Cooper." The girl looked at Carmelita, and snapped her fingers. "Related to a Sly Cooper?" Carmelita said, "He's my husband."

Cue a shocked expression on the girl's face, and her saying, "Looks like I owe Cadence a few bits on Looping couples."

Carmelita raised an eyebrow, and the girl chuckled. "Oops. My name's Sunset Shimmer. Have you been experiencing time looping again and again?" Carmelita nodded. Sunset then said, "Well, here's what's going on, odd though it may be..."

After Sunset gave the explaination, Carmelita thought over what she had just heard. Crazy though it was, it made sense with what she'd experienced. Sunset had also explained why she attacked what she called 'Kyubey.' Carmelita made up her mind, and said, "Let's go find this Kyubey. If what you've said about it is true, then it needs to be brought to justice. I'll call my husband. Let's catch us a monster."

Sunset chuckled. "The game is afoot."

So then, Ladies and Gentlemen! Welcome to the first compilation of the Sly Cooper branch of The Infinite Loops, where characters from all over the Multiverse are stuck repeating their lives again and again. Here are the basic details.

One person in a Loop, often the main character, is an Anchor. They are the person who first starts time looping. In this branch, that's Sly.

There is always at least one Anchor present in any given Time Loop snippet, but it may not be the local one.

The standard pattern for a Loop is that the Anchor, along with anyone else that is Looping there, become aware of the Loop at a particular point in the story. From there, events play out as influenced by the Loopers present, acting with the added benefit of their foreknowledge, until either a preset end point is reached or all the Loopers have been offed. Becoming aware of the Loops is called being Awake, with a capital A.

In each Loop, the only one that's guaranteed to be Awake is the Anchor. For regular Loopers, they may not always be Awake in a given Loop. To regular Loopers, the Loops where they're Awake are perceived as being one after the other. For example, if Sly experiences 10 Loops, and Carmelita experiences Loops 2 and 8, she'll feel as if she's left Loop 2 and directly gone to Loop 8, while Sly experiences all of the ones inbetween. Since I'm still new to the idea of Loopers being married (there's only one other well-known Looping couple in Spike/Rarity over in the MLP branch), I'm still not entirely sure how that affects things.

Loops shown may not be in chronological order, but it is strongly preferred that they don't contradict one another (It's preferred that if A happens before B, then B cannot happen before A)

Just about every Looper goes very, very stir crazy, and as such, hilarity typically ensues when they have fun.

1.1: It begins...

1.2: At least he's learning.

1.3: Penelope taking Bentley's place was easy. I was torn between Jean Bison, El Jefe and Panda King for whoever took

Murray's spot. May have to do another couple of Loops covering those options.

1.4: Time for a little bit of fun futzing with established canon.

1.5: Carmelita joins the fray.

1.7: The first response to this one was ' *They have no clue what a monumental occasion they just sprung...and no other Looper will realize it unless they look at the Hub source material.* **'**

1.8: There was a bit of a discussion on this one, but I'd say these two snippets came out alright.

Compilation Set 2

So then, been a few weeks, and we've had a number of good Loops coming in. Here's the next batch!

"Stay still dammit!"

"Why should I? You're trying to punch me!"

This was a rather interesting Loop but it was a pain in some places. For one, it was a world full of oceans, and where had Sly ended up? In the middle of a huge city that took up an entire island, he had a little trouble remembering the name, Water Seven maybe? Considering it was like Venice on steroids as far as river travel went, for a raccoon that couldn't swim, it wasn't a good thing. It did have its fun parts though, and they were that he'd still ended up as a thief, and he'd accidentally pissed off two of the local Marines, Commodore Muggshot and his second in command, a red haired cattle-prod user named Reno. One part that was pretty funny was that even with the transition to human; Muggshot still looked almost exactly like the bulldog he was back in the baseline Loop. Thanks to his subspace pocket he had his trusty cane available to him, so he was able to fight like he could in the baseline Loops.

Dodging an attack from Reno and getting his cane's crook around Muggshot's neck, Sly was able to pull Muggshot into falling on top of Reno, sending them both to the ground and giving him a chance to escape.

"Well guys, it's been fun, but I've really gotta get moving. See ya!" Sly said with a grin as the two Marines tried to get back up. As they scrambled to get back to their feet, Sly had taken a small pellet from the pouch on his belt. Throwing it to the floor revealed that it was a smoke bomb, allowing Sly to escape from the scene without too much trouble.

No sign of Carmelita though. Odd.

"So, Carmelita, can you keep the chopper a bit steadier? I can't line up my shots right." Sly asked, as he manned the helicopter's rear turret. On his own for this Loop, he had managed to get himself back to the incident with what would have been Clock-La, although this time things had progressed differently. By preventing Neyla from getting the better of him and Carmelita through some covertly acquired photos and voice recordings, the whip-wielding tiger had been dragged down with him, Carmelita, and Murray. This in turn allowed Bentley to engineer an escape (leaving her all alone in prison). Because of that, Neyla didn't get in their way again during the climax of the Contessa showdown, and at this point was still imprisoned.

"I'm trying Ringtail. You try dodging falling debris while trying to avoid being shot at by a giant death machine of an owl! Bentley said that the Klaww Gang's leader's inside that thing, why?" Carmelita replied, trying her best to keep the chopper airborne.

It was as she'd said though. With no Neyla present to betray him, Arpeggio had managed to become the core of the resurrected Clockwerk, the resulting iteration choosing the name Clock-peggio.

"I say Cooper, to think you've been a thorn in my side for so long that it's actually somewhat cathartic to hunt you down and exterminate you like the vermin you are." The monstrosity said in its mechanical sounding British accent. "I do believe that I'm going to enjoy seeing you as a smear on the ground."

"Well Carmelita, I'd say you're the better shot. Switch?" Sly asked. Clock-peggio was surprisingly more of a problem than Clock-La had been in the Baseline, considering the fact that he was fighting much more cleverly than Clock-La had. Not every shot was aimed at the helicopter, instead opting for some shots being aimed at the obstacles around them, in an attempt to limit their movement.

"You sure you can fly this?" Carmelita asked. Whenever she was Awake for this part, she was usually the gunner because of her marksmanship. Sly had gotten a lot of experience after the times when he switched with Carmelita as well as the steadily increasing number of flying vehicles that he'd piloted across the multiverse. As a result the experience had actually made him the better pilot out of the two.

"I'm sure! We'll be fine, just shoot that thing down!" Sly replied, as he left the turret for a few moments to take over from Carmelita, who then manned the turret.

As a result of this switch-over, the rest of the battle took a while, but things had ultimately been easier to work with, especially when Sly cleared the vicinity of the airship. Since that forced Clock-peggio to fight much more directly, giving Carmelita the chances she needed to go all out against him.

"This is… certainly more difficult than I expected. Perhaps another method could work." The mad bird said to himself as he turned around and flew back towards the airship.

"Oh no you don't." Sly shouted as he followed suit and began to chase Clock-peggio.

"Let's see… Cooper had two accomplices if I remember correctly… ah! There we go!" Clock-peggio muttered as he found Bentley and Murray trying to make their way to the control room to try and veer the ship off course. If they succeeded, then there would be no turning Paris into a hate-fuelled bloodbath. No bloodbath, no hatred for Clockwerk's old Hate Chip to draw power from, and no power to the Hate Chip meant that there would be no immortality for Arpeggio.

"Come on Murray! We've been spotted!" Bentley shouted to his friend as the robotic terror readied its talons.

"I'm comin', Bentley!" Murray replied trying to reach the turtle first. Thankfully he managed to do so, and after grabbing his friend, the

hippo leapt down onto one of the lower levels, barely avoiding getting grabbed.

"Th-that was a close one!" Bentley gasped, visibly nervous (more so than normal during times like this). Suddenly his Binoc-U-Com started ringing.

"Sly, what happened? I thought he was after you."

"Sorry about that Bentley, he suddenly turned around and went after you. Me and Carmelita are going to come to you. Are you able to hack the control system remotely?"

"I should be able to do that, so long as Clock-peggio doesn't come after me in the meantime. We were going after the control room because it'd be faster to work the system directly." Bentley explained.

"Then I'll buy you some time, but to make sure that he comes after me, I want you on the helicopter and Murray piloting. Carmelita'll be your gunner." Sly decided.

"But what about you Ringtail?" Carmelita asked, concerned.

"I'll work on foot, try to keep his attention. Maybe I can try to get him to accidentally break one of the engines while I'm at it. That should either slow down the ship, which'll keep it from reaching Paris for a bit, or it'll bring the whole thing crashing down because it can't get enough lift. Either way, just trying to do that'll definitely get him coming after me."

"But if the ship can't stay airborne, you'll go down with it!" Bentley cried, shocked.

"I promise you Bentley. First sign of the ship starting to go down, I'll get off it as fast as I can." Sly promised. "Besides, I've got my Paraglider, so as long as I'm in open air, I can get away pretty easily."

"…Alright, I guess given he went after us, there's no other way. If someone goes after the engines, he'll try to kill them first." Bentley surmised. "Just be careful, OK?"

"I will, Bentley. I promise." Sly replied as the helicopter landed. "Murray, fly this thing like you've never flown before, got it?" He added, giving Carmelita a quick peck on the cheek before getting out of the vehicle. "I'll try and keep him busy."

"Gotcha Sly, I'll do what I can to slow the ship down remotely. You do whatever you can to keep Clock-peggio off our back." Bentley replied, as he and Murray hugged Sly before getting into the helicopter.

"Good luck Sly. I'll keep the team in the air." Murray added as he got into the pilot's seat.

"Sly?" Carmelita said, looking at him. "Don't die."

"I won't." Sly replied. "Now get going, all of you!"

As the helicopter began to take off again, Sly began making his way towards a more open part of the airship. He needed to catch Clock-peggio's attention and keep it fixed on him.

"I see you, Sly Cooper!"

"Speak of the devil." Sly said to himself as he saw the mechanical owl beginning a dive to try and take him out. "Well then, time to try out a new trick of mine."

Readying his cane and calming his mind, both forearms and the cane itself began to blacken. While onlookers would be confused as to what was happening, to a Looper, the answer was clear. It was Haki, specifically the Armament style.

Time to turn the tables.

2.3 (Valentine Meikin)

"Ten green bottles, sitting in the van, ten green bottles, sitting in the van, and if I find one more green bottle, I'll probably go insane, and there will be eleven green bottles, sitting in the van..." Sly declared in sing-song.

"Clue bottles?" Carmelita asked.

"Clue bottles..." The rest of the Cooper gang declared.

A few loops later, Sly wondered why he found, instead of his file, a pair of tickets to a show nearby.

"Sly, Good idea for you... How many of the safe combinations do you know for the clue bottle safes?" Carmelita asked.

"I could break every safe in all of my adventures while half drunk on cheap wine..." Sly offered, "Not that I expect to deal with it..."

"We are filthy rich," Carmelita offered, "All you'd need to do is break into your family vault as soon as possible, move it somewhere else..."

"Does the police operate a vault?" Sly asked, curiously.

"We do, but it's fallen out of..." Carmelita began.

"Sometimes, I feel like I'm redundant..." Bentley grumbled. Sly hadn't even collected a single clue bottle, instead just cracking the safes without any effort, meaning they didn't even need to figure out what the clues were.

"Bentley, you try to collect what could be a few hundred green bottles just to break a safe combination..." Sly replied.

"Good point, Sly..." Bentley offered, "It does sound really really monotonous... By the way, Sly, What were you doing at that remote

island?"

"Saving myself some money..." Sly offered. The Cooper Vault was now in the most ironic place in its history, and he'd not have to deal with things like Penelope joining then betraying him.

For some reason, He didn't go back in time that loop.

2.4 (Xomniac)

Penelope gasped in shock, jerking forwards and thrusting her hands out onto her workbench to catch herself and keep her from toppling over.

For what felt like ages, the mouse just stood there, panting heavily and watching cold sweat run down her orange visor.

Slowly, as though awaiting a verdict from god, Penelope activated her visor's built in heads-up display.

She didn't cry out when she saw the date. She'd stopped doing that awhile back.

'Again.' Penelope thought numbly. 'I'm back here again. After I betrayed the gang, after I betrayed Sly and Murray. After I... I betrayed Bentley... and after I slipped up and broke his heart without even knowing it.'

Penelope didn't know how or why time was looping like it was, and honestly, she'd stopped caring a long time ago.

'Every time, the same thing...' She mentally whimpered. 'Always too late to fix it, but just in time for-'

BOOM!

Penelope swallowed heavily as an earth-shattering explosion rang out from what she knew was the front gate.

'That.'

The mouse hung her head silently. It was the same song and dance every time: Cooper gang breaks in, Cooper gang destroys giant robot... Bentley destroys her. One way or another.

Oh she'd tried time and time again to change things. Last-minute modifications to her robots, traps, troops, the works. Nothing was able to stop the force of the natural disaster that was the Cooper Gang. She'd tried arguing with Bentley, attempting to draw him over to her side by re-wording her arguments, shifting her pleas so that they were more desperate, more heart-felt. But over time, her words became pathetic excuses to even her own ears. Lately, she just fought him with a cold, dead silence.

Others... well, self-destructs existed for a reason. It sure beat the hell out of the time in prison she inevitably served out otherwise.

But then again, she was already trapped in a prison, wasn't she? One of her own design.

Penelope had all the time in the world, and yet she never had close to enough time to do what she truly desired. Truly a para-

The mouse shook her head violently. Thinking of the skunk led back to thinking of what she'd done, and she was miserable enough as was.

Slowly, Penelope turned her head and stared at the king-sized bed that occupied her room. Maybe, just once, she could rest?

But it was not to be. With a loud crash, the door to her workshop slammed open, allowing one of her Mecha-Wolves to barge in. "Master!" It bellowed in its synthetic voice. "The Cooper Gang has breached the perimeter!"

Penelope took a deep breath before nodding solemnly. "Understood. Gather all troops and hold them off for as long as you can. I'll be there momentarily."

The Mech snapped off a smart salute before loosing a combination of a wolf-howl and a grinding gear and charging off to battle.

Slowly, Penelope stood up from her workbench and walked over to the most prominent feature of the room.

The Black Knight.

A cold hard shell that she had built to shut out all others.

Now, staring into its cold, lifeless visor, Penelope knew that instead, it entrapped her, keeping her away from everyone else.

Her friends.

Her family.

Her love.

Tears streamed down the mouse's face, though her expression remained unchanged.

"I hate you." She whispered.

The Black Knight's cruel, silent laughter was all the response she received.

2.5 (Valentine Meikin)

She looked at the Black Knight, and started working on something she should have done decades of loops ago...

When the Cooper Gang arrived, they found her asleep, the Black Knight armour dismantled. A note was left with Bentley's name on it. Sly just went on with what he needed to do there, and left, Pocketing the note. When she woke up, and noticed Sly had already left, and hadn't even disturbed her, she smiled, briefly, and wondered how she'd go about actually approaching them as an ally, instead of the force of their destruction...

2.6 (Valentine Meikin)

Carmelita Awoke in the oddest situation yet. She was again human, but what confused her was that, somehow, she was stood on the side of a building, a reddish fox with an odd luminescence stood watching her. She felt her loop memories hit, and managed to bounce her way back down to street level, ducking into an alleyway.

As she got her bearings, she was tapped on the head, and looked up to see a familiar, from several loops with them as humans, face look down at her, a racoon with the same strange fur as the fox wrapped round his neck.

"Ringtail, don't show off..." She sighed, rolling her eyes.

Several loops later, Bentley and Murray turned off the visual feed after nearly throwing up. "Umm, Sly... Can you please remember which way is up?" Bentley asked, "I'm getting vertigo from watching you..."

"Sorry, guys... I recently discovered a rare talent of the Cooper Clan... It allows me to ignore gravity..." Sly offered.

"Well, Warn us next time..." Bentley offered.

It was so much easier to do things like taking on Clockwerk when he could just run straight up a sheer wall like it wasn't there...

Carmelita even agreed not to do it where the Cooper Gang would notice; just so no-one would figure out he was using a white lie...

2.7

Typically Sly tended to Awaken during a Loop while either being still (be it laying down or standing still), or while he was running.

This time though, not so much.

From the look of things, he was back in Raleigh's hideout, in the Welsh Triangle, probably the engine room or some other aspect of the inner workings.

He also happened to be in mid-air at the time.

"What?" He asked himself quickly as he shifted his gravity over to the nearest wall.

'Ok this move is going to be really handy if waking up while I'm in the air is going to become a thing.' Sly thought, as he gradually adjusted gravity again so that he could slide down the wall.

Looking through his Loop memories, this one was pretty baseline for the most part; the one standout at this point was just that Murray had already taken up his persona of 'The Murray' by this point.

As usual though, Raleigh went down without much effort (a Haki boosted cane helped), but it was when they were back in Paris that something really caught his attention. While Murray was busy eating his way through a cake they'd gotten on the way back, Bentley seemed to be a bit quieter than normal. After running through so many Loops, he knew that at this point, Bentley would be busy planning for the trip to Mesa City after checking the Police File.

Taking him through to another part of the hideout, the two sat down opposite each other.

"Something got ya down, Bentley?" Sly asked, concerned.

"I'm alright Sly," Bentley replied, "it's just I had this weird dream the other night. It was really vivid so I can remember it really clearly, but, well; I've got this feeling of-"

"Déjà vu?" Sly finished, "Let me guess. In the dream you were in a wheelchair."

"H-how'd you know that?"

"Then there was this mouse named Penelope, and the whole time travel caper, right?" Sly added.

"Sly, you're scaring me." Bentley replied, visibly shuffling back into his chair.

"What if I told you that it wasn't a dream?" Sly asked, "What if I told you that I've been through the same thing more times than I can remember?"

"Sly, what's going on?"

"I'll explain it soon. Come on, Inspector Fox is waiting for me, and now, she's waiting for you too." Sly said, "She's the same as us, so there's no need to worry."

"Forgive me if I'm a little sceptical, Sly. The Carmelita I remember tried to arrest us whenever an active Clockwerk wasn't involved." Bentley replied.

"Well that's changed. She's on our side right now, so come on. The two of us will explain what's happening to you."

It had taken a fair amount of convincing to get Bentley to go with him, but eventually the two arrived at a small café. Upon arriving, Sly spotted Carmelita sat at one of the tables.

"Hey there Carmelita." Sly said with a smile.

"Good evening Sly. Why's Bentley here?" She replied.

"Well…" Sly answered, not exactly sure how to word it, "I got no way to put it other than Bentley's a Looper now."

"Really?!" Carmelita asked, stunned.

"Yep, we're up to three." Sly replied. "Well Bentley, we've got some explaining to do…"

"Ooh, new Loopers. I love meeting new Loopers. My name's Twilight Sparkle. Welcome to Equestria."

Sly and Bentley just stood there, not exactly sure how to proceed. For Sly, even being told about this place by Zeke back in Empire City didn't do him much good, besides, it had been so long ago he'd not been sure whether or not he'd actually end up there. He had though, and had become a pony on entry. When he had looked over himself previously, he had found himself to be a blue Earth Pony with a grey mane and a cutie mark that resembled his cane's crook. One other notable detail was the three white rings on his tail, making it look very similar to a raccoon's tail. According to his memories he had discovered his mark when he realised that his talent was incredible sneaking skills. He also apparently went by Artful Dodger here. One thing he had done as soon as he arrived was pull a spare hat out of his Subspace Pocket.

Bentley meanwhile had become a green Unicorn, with a very short forest green mane. While keeping his glasses, he was thankful that he didn't require a wheelchair here. With a cutie mark that was a

black circle with a few white 1's and 0's inside it. His talent was apparently data analysis and organisational skills.

"Well, in all honesty Miss Sparkle, I never expected Equestria to be quite like this." Sly replied.

"You've heard of us then?" Twilight asked, intrigued.

"The guy who gave me the Welcome to the Multiverse speech said that you were better at it than he was. My wife got the speech from someone- err, somepony, native to this world during that same Loop. If I remember the name correctly, it was Sunset Shimmer, I think?" Sly explained.

"Well the last time that she was here, Sunset Shimmer did mention giving a new Looper the speech after chasing off Kyubey. The two of them then joined forces to keep Kyubey from claiming any victims." Twilight mused, "That must have been your wife, Carmelita, right?"

"That's right, although she's going by Virtue in this world. I'm currently Artful Dodger, and Bentley here goes by Fact Finder, right?"

"That's what these memories call me; I'm still not entirely used to this." Bentley replied.

"Really? How many Loops have you been through?" Twilight asked.

"This is my… third. Sly helps out with the terminology, but I first became aware of the Loops when I discovered that I didn't need a wheelchair anymore." Bentley explained, "Since then it's been just a regular one-"

"We call that a Baseline Loop Bentley." Sly chimed in.

"Thanks Sly. It's pretty much just been two Baseline Loops before this one." Bentley finished.

"Ooh, well that is good news because I can probably provide you with a more in depth introduction to what's going on, if you'd like. Sly

and Carmelita are quite young for Loopers compared to some of us. But first you'd probably want some information regarding this world first." Twilight replied.

"It would be appreciated." Bentley confirmed.

"Well to put it simply, we Loopers here have set up Equestria as a Sanctuary Loop. That means that any Loopers who arrive here from the other branches are able to have a nice, quiet Loop for once. You can pick a role and fill it. You can go travelling; anything goes provided you do so semi-peacefully at least. I remember one instance: Big guy, very scary looking. He was a world-domination style villain back in his branch. After ending up here, he became a manestylist here because his home community prided themselves on horsemanship. No major goals, he just wanted to relax for once."

"Sounds like it'll be a nice vacation then." Sly replied, stretching. "I'm going to find Carmelita and we'll discuss what we're going to do. You'll be OK here Bentley?" He added, waiting for a confirmation from his friend before walking out the door.

"So, you said you would give me a proper introduction to all this?" Bentley asked.

"Of course. Just give me a minute to set up Mr Fact Finder, and we'll begin." Twilight replied with a smile.

A couple of months passed, and while Bentley had taken up the role of a repairstallion around Ponyville and Canterlot, Sly and Carmelita had started the Loop by spending time just relaxing and enjoying each other's company. Twilight had even arranged for the group to have somewhere to stay during the Loop. Sly and Carmelita received a house; while Bentley was given a smaller place nearby.

Like her green friend, Carmelita had ended up as a Unicorn, with her coat being the same colour as it was in their Loop, while her mane was as close to its original style as it could be. Her Cutie Mark had

ended up as a gold star over a blue circle. To the three of them, it signified her skill as an offer for Interpol. As far as many of the Ponies were concerned, it more felt representative of her 'Gold Star' degree of service when she did something to help someone else.

Of course, after having met Rainbow Dash, Sly had gotten into a bit of a prank war with the blue Pegasus, while Carmelita had gotten a job as a courier and struck up a bit of a friendship with Applejack.

The prank war had started simply enough, black rings on telescopes/binoculars, the odd jump scare (Owls made Sly a little uncomfortable, and Rainbow had capitalised on that, much to Carmelita's amusement), and various other tricks. Sly had made liberal use of some of the Thievious Raccoonus skills, allowing him to even the odds against Rainbow's flight.

Everything came to a head though about 3 weeks prior to the Running of the Leaves…

"I don't know Sly; didn't Carmelita's letter say she'd be back today?" Bentley asked, as he used his magic to tie some thread to the door.

"Yeah, but she isn't due back until around dusk, we've still got a good eight hours before then, just enough time to do one last prank and then get the place cleaned up." Sly replied as he checked to make sure that the thread ran to the right place. Once it was all set up and tested, Sly placed a cream pie (courtesy of Pinkie, thus the cream was in Rainbow's colours) at the end of a makeshift catapult.

"Well you gotta tell me Sly, why'd you invite Rainbow Dash over again?"

"As far as she knows, I want to arrange a big prank on Pinkie Pie, and when I told Dash about what I had planned, she wanted in. Simple." Sly explained, "She shows up, I'll be waiting upstairs. I tell her that I'll be right down and that she can let herself in. She opens the door, pulls the thread in doing so, and she gets a face full of pie."

"All this for a pie in the face. You know if you applied yourself like this back home we'd have a much easier time with most things."

"Well I'm not breaking into anywhere to steal something; pranks are much easier to set up. A heist is a different beast altogether." Sly refuted.

"True, true." Bentley replied as he looked out the window. "OK, Rainbow Dash is incoming! We need to get upstairs!"

The two hurried to the upper floor of the house and kept watch out the window, sure enough Rainbow Dash was on the way.

Best laid plans have that curious tendency to go awry though.

"Uh oh." Sly said as he looked through a pair of binoculars.

"What's wrong, Sly?" Bentley asked, slightly worried.

"Dash isn't alone. She's just ran into Twilight and… oh no. Carmelita's there too!" Sly replied, "Now all three are coming this way! She wasn't meant to be back until tonight!"

"She must've caught an earlier train. We're in trouble Sly! What do we do?"

"…I gotta get the trap disconnected, fast!" Sly said, getting up and bolting for the stairs.

It was too late though. They hadn't been too far off and Sly had taken some time to make the decision to abort the plan.

"Dodger, I'm-" Carmelita said, mere moments before the pie slammed into her face. Sly had only reached the bottom of the stairs as the door opened, and could only look on in horror at what had happened.

"V-Virtue, I'm… I'm sorry! So sorry!" He sputtered, as Carmelita wiped the cream away from her eyes, and sighed.

"Meant for Rainbow Dash?" She asked, eerily calm. All Sly could do was nod slowly, terrified about what would happen. By this point, Bentley had joined the group, and was equally horrified at what had happened.

"Hmm, too bad Dodger, you got me with it instead. Now if you'll excuse me girls, I need to go get cleaned up. I'll be right back." Carmelita said as Sly and Bentley cleared a path for her to get to the bathroom.

When she had left the room, Rainbow piped up.

"So that was meant to get me? It would have been a good prank." She said,

"But now I'm just hoping I make it through tonight." Sly replied nervously.

As it turned out, nothing had come of the incident. When Carmelita returned, it was as if nothing had happened. In fact, nothing had been done to punish Sly since then, and the Running of the Leaves was just around the corner.

Unlike before, Twilight had chosen not to compete in the event this time, and Sly had taken her place at the start line.

"Dodger, before you go, I have a little something to say to you." Carmelita said with a smile.

"What is it Virtue?" Sly asked.

"Well, remember that pie incident a few weeks back?" She replied.

Just hearing that turned Sly's blood to ice.

"Well, why don't we turn this into your chance to save yourself? You see, I'm part of the race too. I'm not just in it for first place though. I'm

also in it to hunt you down. So here's the prize for you: Cross the Finish Line without me catching you or without me beating you there; and you get off scot-free. If I catch you, or I cross that finish line before you though. Your. Flank. Is. Mine. Understand?"

Sly could see in her eyes that she was serious. This wasn't a friendly race anymore; he would be racing to save his skin.

To the other racers, there would at least be a story to tell others, especially when there were bolts of magic flying about, and the background noise of the race had been altered with shouting like "Get back here Ringtail!" and "Cream Pie me will you? Time for some payback!" alongside the normal cacophony of hooves hitting the ground.

2.8 Extension (By Valentine Meikin)

"You think she did this purely because she's NOT had to chase him all loop?" Bentley asked Twilight, who shrugged.

"All I know is that..." Twilight began, "Did they just invert gravity?!"

"They do that..." Bentley sighed, "I turn off the camera when he does that, so I don't throw up, since it's a chase camera..."

Twilight winced.

2.9 (Valentine Meikin)

Murray looked confused as Bentley told him not to set off as they got Sly's file.

"Sorry, Murray, We just need to pick up our mole in the department..." Bentley stated, "We'd not be able to get away with half of what we're planning without them..."

He was surprised when Carmelita dropped into the alley and was yanked into the van, giving Sly a deep kiss before hanging a nightstick with the same hook shape on one end as Sly's cane on the wall.

"Right, I've got an update for you... Someone named Penelope was seen sneaking around where she shouldn't be..." Carmelita stated, getting out a file, and dropping it in front of them, Bentley's eyebrows raising, "What's up, Bentley?"

"Carmelita's the mole?!" Murray stated, confused, "What did you do? Elope while we weren't looking?"

"Who says I wasn't always playing both sides?" Carmelita offered, pointing out her nightstick.

Penelope didn't like rain. Well, most electronics didn't work well in rain. When Inspector Fox arrived suddenly, she looked very worried.

"So, Ms. Black Baron... Care to explain why you're sequence breaking?" Carmelita asked, "We're not meant to encounter you at all for several months..."

"You..." Penelope stated, confused, "How would you know about that?"

"I've been an unofficial member of Sly's gang for... a while, but recently took up the role of a mole in my own department since Bentley began looping..." Carmelita stated, "Sly noticed you seemed to be avoiding us..."

"It's more that..." Penelope admitted, "Alright, It's more that I'm avoiding Bentley. I betrayed him, I leaked confidential information, I almost destroyed the Cooper family..."

"You get that, Bentley?" Carmelita suddenly stated, for Penelope to hear Bentley voice stated, "Sure thing, Ms. Cooper... Bring her in, I'll get the presentation ready..."

"Ms. Cooper?!" Penelope stated, confused, "Since when?"

"Ancient Egyptian times..." Carmelita joked as Penelope was lead to the Cooper van to an encounter she'd been dreading...

2.9 Extended (Xomniac)

Bentley sighed heavily as he shut the projector off. "And that's basically it. Welcome to the Loops, I guess."

Penelope didn't have a response. She merely continued to stare numbly at the blank screen, trying in vain to process what she had just seen.

Bentley watched her for a moment before sighing again and taking his glasses off, polishing them furiously. "I... realize that from your perspective I must have asked you this like a million times already-"

"Three hundred fourteen thousand one hundred fifty-nine." She replied in a dead tone before chuckling humorlessly. "Huh. Pi. Ironic."

Bentley swallowed heavily, all but ramming his glasses back onto the bridge of his nose. "Why, Penelope? Please. I don't care what the explanation is, I... I just need one! Please... if there was ever-"

"DON'T!" Bentley jerked in shock when Penelope whipped around, her eyes filled with desperation. "Don't ever question that! All this time, all these years, those days we shared in the lab, working together? Inventing together? Those were the one constant I could depend on! The memories of those beautiful, wonderful days were

what kept me going! Without them... without them..." The mouse bowed her head in despair. "Who knows what I'd be like today..."

"Then why!?" Bentley demanded.

"I DON'T KNOW!"

Silence fell over the room as the two geniuses stared at each other, Penelope's chest heaving from her outburst.

"...what?" Bentley whispered.

Penelope stared at him for a few seconds before sobbing and grabbing her head as she shook it violently. "I-I don't know. I... I've been reliving those days for so long i-i-it's just a big blur. I- maybe I was jealous of you and Sly's friendship, or... or I really was in it for the money or-or-or... I just don't know anymore! All I really do know is that betraying the Cooper Gang, betraying you? It was the single worst mistake I have ever made in my entire life! And... and I know that no matter what I do... or how long I live..." She looked up at Bentley, tears flowing down her cheeks. "I can never make up for it."

And with that, she drew her knees up and curled up in her chair, breaking down violently.

For the first time in what felt like eternity, Penelope let all the emotions she'd been balling up inside her flow freely all at once.

Then, she gasped in shock when she felt a skinny pair of arms wrap itself around her neck from behind in a hug.

She looked over her shoulder into Bentley's shyly grinning face in shock. "B-but... I... all those things I said... all that I did..."

"Look at it this way..." Bentley shrugged sheepishly. "You've got eternity to make up for it."

Penelope's jaw worked itself uselessly for a moment before choking out a sob and throwing her arms around her old friend's shell, her

crying renewed.

But now, her tears were ones of joy.

Themis leaned back in her chair and grinned successfully at the screen before her. "Oh yeah, I'm good, chalk one up for justice!"

"And chalk one up for my debugging hammer!" The toga-wearing Admin paled drastically and swivelled her chair around to behold an irate Skuld tapping the aforementioned weapon in her hand menacingly. "Unless you can give me a valid explanation in ten seconds or less about what the hell you were thinking!"

Themis swallowed heavily and gave the senior Admin a shaky grin. "Fixing one of my Loopers?"

Skuld's scowl deepened further. "Oh really? Because to me..." She leaned in close to the Greek Goddess of Justice, forcing her to scoot her chair back. "It looks to me like you hacked a person's file so that they would loop through the worst moment in their life over and over again, enforcing Setsuna Syndrome until they had a mental breakdown!"

Themis glanced around for any means of escape before garnering the courage to shove Skuld away. "Back off! I was doing what was right! I'm the Goddess of Justice, and what Penelope did, no matter the reason, was completely and utterly wrong! She had to face justice somehow, so I gave her a prison sentence. Sue me!"

"Oh yeah?" Skuld demanded darkly. "Then what happens now?"

"Now?" Themis shrugged idly. "Whatever she wants. In case you didn't notice, she just passed her parole hearing with flying colours. I've already put all her markers back in the proper positions. All charges dropped, she's free to go."

Skuld stared at Themis for a second before sighing tiredly and slapping her forehead. "You're playing with fire, Themis."

The Greek Goddess snorted in derision and turned back to her terminal. "I started playing with fire when I took on a Loop full of thieves. I'll be fine. Anything else?"

The only response she received was a bunch of dark grumbling that slowly receded into the distance.

"I didn't think so."

And so another batch of Loops comes to an end.

2.1: A bit of fun in the One Piece universe.

2.2: I went with the idea for this one, 'What if Sly had managed to get Neyla arrested during her double cross?' It meant that Clockwerk's body would be taken over by Arpeggio. Since he knew what he was getting into, he was able to focus more and ultimately became a more dangerous foe.

2.3: Let's face it, how many people were driven mad by trying to find that one last bottle in a world? *Raises hand*

2.4: The start of Xomniac's pet project for this set.

2.5: Valentine pitching in for the Penelope excerpts with a piece of his own.

2.6: Another one from Valentine, and the first instance of a possible recurring gag.

2.7: Bentley's first Loop.

2.8: First MLP Loop, with Bentley getting a proper 'Welcome to the Multiverse' presentation alongside Sly's antics with an angry Carmelita.

2.9: And thus, Penelope is redeemed and begins Looping normally. We also get a glimpse of the Admin for this branch, Themis, Goddess of Justice.

See you next time folks!

Compilation Set 3

3.1 (Xomniac)

"And that's pretty much the plan." Carmelita finished, shutting off the projector. "Any questions?"

"Nope!"

"None, milady!"

"Um, yeah, I've got one."

Carmelita sighed heavily. "What is it, Sly?"

"Mind if I ask it in private?" The Master Thief asked uneasily.

Carmelita glanced at Murray and Galeth before nodding. "You two go and get the charges set up, I'll settle things here with Sly."

Once the hippo and medieval raccoon were out the door, Sly got up and walked over to his wife. "Soo..." He trailed off. "Any idea on what the heck is going on?"

The inspector groaned and slapped a hand to her forehead. "I know about as much as you do, Ringtail, and I think it's about ten times as bizarre."

Carmelita and Sly had just Awoken in the Middle-Ages, and their Loop Memories were... disconcerting, to say the least.

To be specific, they were especially confused about Bentley discovering an apparently un-Awake Penelope's treachery very soon after their arrival.

To say that the action was dramatic would be an understatement.

Especially considering how he'd run off into the night, bawling miserably and no one had seen him since!

"We can't just leave him out there, Carmelita!" Sly protested.

"Look, Sly," She placated hastily. "Bentley, even when he's not Awake, is fairly strong. He can take care of himself. Right now, our best chance to find him is to play things by the book, alright?"

Sly stared at her miserably for a second before sighing heavily and lowering his hat over his eyes. "So be it." He darkened his staff with Haki and slammed it into his palm. "Let's go kick some Dork Knight butt!"

Carmelita grinned ferociously, activating her Stun Pistol. "That's my man."

For the first few minutes, everything went as planned.

The charges were set, the drawbridge was blown, and the Cooper Gang charged into the castle.

Then, everything went pear-shaped.

First, no one expected the portcullis to slam down around them before Galeth lost his cane and while Sly was still behind it.

Second, Penelope's Project Overlord did not normally have legs, allowing it tower even higher than it normally did.

And third...

"MUHUHAHAHAHA!"

Sly worked his jaw helplessly as he tried to come to terms with what he was hearing. "Uhh... guys? Am I going nuts, or did Penelope just...?"

"Don't worry, ringtail, I heard it too."

"Just checking."

"FOOLISH COOPER GANG!" Penelope bellowed through her mech's speakers, having her robot gesticulate wildly. "DO YOU TRULY THINK YOU CAN STOP ME, THE MIGHTY BLACK KNIGHT!? NOTHING CAN HALT MY REIGN OF TERROR! I! AM! INVINCIBLE! MUHUHAHAHA!"

Sly's thought process was still stuck on the evil laugh when another shocking development hit him dead on.

"NOT TODAY, BLACK KNIGHT!"

From out of the blue, a very large, very familiar, and very green machine dropped out of the sky on the opposite side of the moat, all three heads roaring furiously at Penelope. Even more surprising was the voice of the one apparently controlling it.

"YOUR REIGN OF TERROR ENDS HERE, YOU VILE VILLAIN!" Bentley hollered at her.

"GASP!" Penelope, well, gasped. "MY MOAT MONSTER! BENTLEY, YOU CUR! YOU DARE DEFILE MY WORK!?"

"HA! YOU CALL IT WORK, I CALL IT AN EMBARRASSMENT!" The turtle shot back. "I MADE IT PASSABLE!"

"WHY YOU- HAVE AT THEE!" Penelope's mecha brandished it's war axe at the metal dragon.

"EN GARDE!" Bentley's mount let loose a trio of infernos.

Carmelita whistled appreciatively from within the Cooper Gang's safe, sturdy, impenetrable cage. "Well, that's not something you see every day, huh Sly? ...Sly?"

"Woo! Go Bentley! Kick her ass!"

"Yeah! You go, Bentley! Show her your awesome might!"

"Ten gold pieces on the dragon! No, twenty!"

"Urgh, men."

3.2

"Hey Shepard, you may want to check this out, we've got ourselves a slight Fused Loop going."

Arriving on the bridge, Shepard (an older looking black man this time around) looked at his helmsman.

"So, who's our guest?" he asked. As if on cue, the avatar for EDI popped up, albeit with a couple of noticeable differences.

For one, the avatar was green.

Second, that did not sound like EDI.

"I'm guessing you two are Loopers then?" The new AI asked.

"That's right." Joker replied, leaning back into his chair. "I'm Jeff, but folks around here call me Joker."

"As for me, I'm this Loop's anchor. As for who I am specifically, it's a little complicated." Shepard added. "I'm never the same from one Loop to another. The one real constant is that my name has Shepard in it somewhere."

"I'm Bentley." The AI said, "What do you mean 'you're never the same'?"

"Long story short he could be male, female, Human, Quarian, heck, I think there may have been one Loop where he ended up as a bunch

of Geth AIs working together." Joker replied, "That was one weird-ass Loop, Commander."

"Definitely, I wouldn't care to repeat that one anytime soon. So, Bentley, what's your Loop like?" Shepard asked.

"Well, it's pretty different from this." Bentley replied, "All the Loop Memories kicking in, I'd say we're a century or so behind you guys, but, well, here's the gist of it…"

This Loop was going to be strange.

No Bentley, and in his place was a silver rabbit. According to the Loop Memories, she went by EDI, after her initials in this set of events.

"Alright Sly, I'll be monitoring radio chatter and security feeds, I'll keep you informed." She said, Sly was still a little surprised just how easily she was able to handle so many jobs at once.

He'd have to compare notes with Bentley next time they met up.

3.3 (Valentine Meikin)

Sly looked at what was normally the Cooper Gang, as they found themselves all in police uniforms, even Penelope, who was looking distinctly uneasy in this way. A blond-haired man was currently the chief of their department, and had just called them in for a case.

"Cooper, Cooper..." The Chief declared, "As usual, it's our department's worst enemy, Carmen Sandiego..."

"What's she stolen this time?" Bentley asked, for the Chief to hand them a message for them both.

"Dear Sly and Carmelita Cooper,

If you want your normal jobs back, come and catch me.

Carmen." The note read, for them to roll their eyes skyward.

She'd managed to loop in such a way that she'd stolen the Cooper Gang's job, and now they were forced to be the police force tracking her down.

Within moments, gravity was not a concern for them, as they literally shot out of the window to go find the most audacious thief in known history.

3.4 (Valentine Meikin)

Sly walked into the lair, due to the fact it was the start of the loop but they hadn't even gone after the Fearsome Five, and frowned as he noticed the dismantled parts of Clockwerk with Bentley and Penelope discussing various things.

"Umm, Guys, why is my current nemesis spread out all over the room?" He asked.

"Sorry, Sly... Didn't notice you there..." Bentley declared, "We're currently in the middle of disassembling the design of the Hate Chip..."

"You're reverse engineering the chip that keeps my only remaining arch-nemesis in the game?!" Sly asked, surprised.

"If we can get it right, it will cause an interesting, erm, reaction..." Bentley offered.

Several loops later, when only Sly and Carmelita were awake, he got out a small device, checking it was online, before pressing a button

and going to go see Carmelita about some alone time. Halfway through getting a status report from one of his subordinates, Clockwerk suddenly found his body shutting down and falling apart as the Hate Chip abruptly failed.

"Sly, What about the Fiendish Five? Your family's legacy?" Bentley hissed in his ear.

"I have a feeling we have time to spare on that..." Sly offered, "I need you to look into something while I deal with other things..."

For Sly, it was a vacation loop, and he considered the first field test of Bentley's device to be a success. Of course, he wouldn't tell Bentley that it was his fault Clockwerk dropped dead rather a lot...

3.5 (Xomniac)

"Alright, let's see..." Penelope tapped away on her tablet. "Test 24-F of the Anti-Clockwerk Detonator." She glanced up at the rest of the lab. Bentley was setting a spare Hate Chip into position on a small stand while a simple remote with a red button lay on the table before her. "Using technology we've acquired from other Loops, such as Star Wars and Star Trek, and technology-prone Loopers, like Apple Bloom and Anakin Skywalker, we've set up the device designed to let out a globe-spanning signal. In theory, the signal *should* short out Clockwerk's Hate Chip, thus ending either him, or all of the pieces that once composed him," She looked back up at Bentley. "Well, ready to give it a whirl?"

The turtle gave her a thumbs-up as he wheeled back over to her. "One hundred percent! The Hate Chip has a current flowing through it and the detonator is calibrated to the correct signal. I do believe this will work! Let's change Sly's life for the better!"

Penelope nodded in agreement. "Right then..." She picked up the remote observed the malevolent piece of hardware uneasily. "Let's

do this. Activating Detonator in three... two... one..."

She pressed the button.

The Hate Chip let out a flurry of sparks, a hiss, and gave a final dying flash before finally falling still, a plume of smoke rising from the charred metal.

Bentley and Penelope gave cheers of elation.

"Success!" Bentley laughed.

"Totally!" The mouse agreed eagerly. "Now come on, let's examine it so we can ascertain the effects."

"On it!" Her companion concurred, wheeling his way back towards the chip's remains.

Penelope made to follow him...

"GAH!"

When she suddenly collapsed to her knees, clutching her head violently.

"PENELOPE!" Bentley cried, immediately turning around and rushing to her side. "Penelope, what's wrong? Did a fragment of metal hit you or-or-or-!"

"Bentley..." Penelope groaned, her voice ridden with pain. "I... I..."

"What is it? What's wrong!? Speak to me!"

"I..." The mouse snapped her head up, her face filled with unholy fury. "I *hate* you!"

Bentley reeled back in shock. "Penelope, wha-GAGH!?" The turtle's protests were cut off by a pair of hands suddenly latching around his

throat and trying to wring the life out of him. " *P-Pene-l-lop-pe!"* Bentley wheezed.

"I utterly *despise* you, Bentley, you worthless piece of *vermin!"* The incensed mouse snarled through grit teeth. "I suffered for years, *decades* , CENTURIES! Time and time and time again, I relived the worst part of my *life!* And it was all! Because! OF YOU!"

"P-Pene-!" Bentley's smothered protests were cut off as he caught sight of Penelope's eyes.

As he looked into her eyes, he saw hate. So much hate, *hate hate hate,* centuries of it, *millennia* in fact. Far too much for Penelope to feel, even with the Loops, but just enough for...

"Clock...werk...!" The turtle choked out.

Lost in her rage, his attacker ignored him. "I'm going to *kill* you, Bentley!" She hissed. "And then, I'M GOING TO KILL COO-!"

CRACK!

"Bweeeegh..." Penelope moaned unintelligibly, her eyes becoming unfocused before she slumped to the ground.

Bentley gulped in air thankfully before readjusting his glasses and gaping up at his savior. "Sly!? But, how did you know that I was in trouble!?"

The Cooper heir tapped his cane in his palm crossly as he stared down at the unconscious mouse. "Haki is a hell of a thing, Bentley. Now then, mind telling what the heck just happened?"

Bentley gently shut the door behind him, wincing at the sobbing coming from within. "She'll be fine." He declared. "There seem to be no long-lasting effects, apart from her conscience."

"So, let me get this straight..." Sly started in disbelief. "You're basically telling me that she was possessed by Clockwerk's *Ghost!?"*

Bentley sighed wearily, taking his glasses off and polishing them furiously. "A crude yet accurate manner of putting it. As far as I can tell, Clockwerk tied his soul to the Hate Chip, imbuing it with his thoughts, his personality, everything that made him, well… him. It's the reason why Clock-La was more 'Clock' than 'La'. When we destroyed the chip, his soul sought out and possessed the nearest fount of negative emotions it could find."

"Which was Penelope." Sly stated accusingly.

"Do *not* blame her for this, Sly!" Bentley shot back, ramming his glasses back onto his nose. "She suffered so much, for so long! She can't help it if she feels a *little* resentment! Look, if it had just been me in there, I bet that... *thing* would have come after me instead. I'm not pure, Sly. I've felt jealousy, rage, even a bit of hate. When I fought Jean Bison, I *wanted* to hurt him. I *liked* watching Carmelita fight Muggshot and arrest him. The truth of the matter is that that thing could have gone after anyone, even you. Don't forget what Sora told us, Sly: We all have darkness in our hearts, at least a bit."

Sly stood in silence for a moment before nodding in agreement. "Alright, alright, I see your point. So, anyways, I take it that your remote's a bust?"

"Well... not entirely." Bentley reached into his Subspace Pocket and tossed the device to Sly. "The device worked fine. The only problem was proximity. Just use it while Clockwerk is still in his base surrounded by robo-minions and his soul should starve to death before it can latch on to anyone."

"Well, alright then!" The raccoon Pocketed the device. "Thanks Bentley!"

"You're welcome. Now then, if you'll excuse me, I have about an hour or so of wholly unnecessary apologies to live through. Wish me

luck."

And with that, the pair parted.

3.6

Another day, another Loop. Sly had discovered that he was on his own this time around, so he decided to stick close to the Baseline for the most part. The Cooper Vault job had gone off as it had done in the past. Doctor M had bugged his Cane. He knew that, but it didn't matter right now. A few well-placed Haki-enhanced Cane smacks was typically enough to knock him out at least. Looking through his ancestor's shrines, he'd noticed something.

Only four Coopers had ever chosen to lead a group of thieves. He was one of them, his Dad was the second, and he'd already met Salim Al Kupar in previous Loops. The one case he knew less about was Henriette Cooper, also known as 'One Eye'. According to her history, she had formed a crew of pirates, and stole from practically every other pirate ship they'd come across. One of the things her crew was known for though was that she trusted them enough to give them their own Cooper Canes. At least, that's how things had happened in this Loop.

It gave him a nice idea to try out.

It had been a while since that one Loop where he'd read more into Henriette's crew, but the time was finally right. Once again, he was the only one Awake. He'd faked amnesia around Carmelita, and when it came to leaving his cane behind, there'd be something added to the farewell that he'd left for the gang to find.

"Hey, over here guys! I've found something!" Bentley shouted as the six remaining Cooper Gang members gathered in front of the cave where Sly had left his Cane and satchel, along with a calling card

(and all the loot that was inside the cave). While Bentley and Penelope weren't Awake, Sly wanted to see what would happen if he had pulled this off.

He'd left six more Cooper Canes alongside newly made calling cards, signifying who each cane belonged to.

To Murray, he had left a heavy duty cane, with a hefty shaft and a thick steel crook. Perfect for the Gang's Enforcer.

The Guru had been given a new walking cane that included a wooden crook, as well as providing a spot to place the Guru's Moonstone.

Dimitri's cane had been a little more awkward, but Sly had been somewhat inspired by Henriette's cane-dagger. As such, Sly had actually given him a bunch of Harpoon-Canes, one long cane, and several smaller ones intended for his spear gun. He'd also included instructions on how to make more.

The Panda King had received a pair of canes. Judging from the materials they were made from, Sly had clearly intended them to work as a fire starter when used together. Perfect for lighting firework fuses.

For Penelope, things were a little smaller, but still appropriate. Her cane was able to double as an adjustable spanner.

Finally there was Bentley, finding an appropriate design for his new cane had been a little tough. He had eventually settled on a smaller cane as well. Unlike Penelope's though, Bentley's cane had been built into his old bowgun, with two crooks forming the bow.

Alongside all of this was a note.

' *Sorry it took so long to set this up, and I'm sorry that I couldn't be there to see you receive these. While we may have come together under stressful circumstances, I can't think of anyone else that I'd*

want to share the adventure with. While we may part ways, the seven of us are the Cooper Gang, and that means that if any of you need help, find me.

Sly.'

The Le Paradox affair had happened really differently this time around as well. Somehow Le Paradox had managed to get his hands on a copy of the Time Machine plans. This time though, Penelope hadn't disappeared beforehand, and when the call was sent out, the entire Cooper Gang, all seven of them, answered it.

The pages of the Thievious Raccoonus had begun disappearing in multiple places at once, forcing the gang to split up to cover them separately. To make matters worse, it seemed like LeParadox had hired many more lackeys this time around, because areas that weren't affected in the baseline were vanishing too. While Dimitri stuck around to direct everything, the rest of the gang had to split into two groups (Penelope had worked with Murray to create a second van to allow for two time machines, and while it took a little time, her and Bentley's efforts allowed them to modify that one for Time Travel as well). The two time travelling groups ended up being Sly, Penelope and the Panda King forming the first, while Bentley, Murray, and the Guru formed the second.

"So, what're the first stops?" Sly asked, as they were about to leave.

"Well, we've got pages disappearing from the second Slytunkamen's time period, as well as Rioichi's over in Feudal Japan. We've got our hands on the items we need for travel." Bentley explained.

"It's all down to which one our group chooses. So what'll it be Sly? Ankh or Dagger?" Penelope asked.

"You know what, I'll take the Ankh." Sly said, as Bentley passed the item to him, and the two groups began their journey to fix the timeline.

3.7 (Xomniac)

Sly Cooper: Gang in Time, Part 2

The Panda King growled furiously as he fired firework after firework down the corridor he was covering. "Cooper, this is the second time that I have faced the undead because of you! In my opinion, that is two too many!"

Sly grunted in response, barely ducking under a mummified jaguar's claws. "Hey, don't blame me!" He protested, swinging his cane and taking the desiccated feline's jaw off. "This is the fourth time in a row that I've had to deal with ghouls from beyond the grave! These things just seem to happen around me is all! And hey, *you're* the one who partnered up with Mz. Ruby! Shouldn't you be used to this by now!?"

"There is a reason why my base was on the side of the world opposite from her, Cooper!"

Slytunkhamen II gave a snarl of exertion as he suddenly materialized behind a mummy cat, driving both of his canes into its back and reducing it to sand and bandages. "I take it that this is a common occurrence for you, descendant of mine?" He demanded, parrying a strike from another undead foe.

"You have no idea!" Sly dodged and retaliated with a cane strike before glancing over his shoulder. "How's it coming, Penelope?"

"I'm working on it Sly, I'm working on it!" The mouse protested, pushing her pith helmet back up on her head as she glanced between the book in her hands and the hieroglyphs on the wall. "It's not *my* fault that these hieroglyph locks are so darn complicated! Those Cleopawtra sisters might be a pair of poser nobility-wannabes, but they do have their moments of brilliance."

"Indeed." The Panda King grunted in agreement as he reloaded his firework mortar. "This door is most impressive. It resisted even the mightiest of my pyrotechnic splendor!"

"HA!" The Egyptian raccoon snorted as he lashed out with his canes. "Those fools are nothing! They set up this barricade using *my* designs for our family's vault! *That* is how they managed to engineer such an impressive door, through *my* blueprints!"

"And we'll get them back, Slytunkhamen, I promise!" Sly reassured his ancestor. "Don't worry, once we get the portion of the blueprints hidden in this pyramid, the other two will be a snap! You'll be able to get started on building the Cooper Vault soon enough."

"And this, and that... AH-HA!" Penelope cried in success. "The proper rune is... this one!" The mouse hastily pressed her finger to a scarab and pushed it in to the wall.

The attacking mummies all froze in their tracks, giving final dying moans before disintegrating.

The thieves all have cries of elation as the door slid open.

"Phew!" Penelope wiped her hand across her brow. "Well, at least that's tha-" She froze as she heard the sound of rumbling coming down the large central corridor.

All the thieves turned and stared in horror as the sound of stone rolling on stone came closer and closer.

"Oh you have *got* to be kidding me." Sly muttered as he pressed his fedora down firmly on his ears.

"Did those two idiots *actually-"* Penelope started in disbelief.

"Er... my apologies..." The headdress wearing Cooper stated nervously as he took a few steps back. "This appears to be one of my own."

The Panda King growled furiously as he clenched his fists, flames beginning to unconsciously wreath them. "Cooper..." He snarled menacingly.

"Kill me later, big guy. For now? RUN!"

And with that the quartet dashed down the corridor, fleeing from the approaching boulder.

"I hope that Bentley and the others are having better luck than we are!" Penelope cried out.

"Je hoo, habba da, nihoola. Jecko no... ebiday..."

"I'm with you on that one, Guru. What has been seen... can *never* be unseen."

"Thank you, thank you, you're all too kind! Madame Geisha will be here all week, folks!"

Sly Cooper: Gang in Time, Part 3

"Avast ye scurvy bilgerats!" A female one-eyed raccoon bellowed as she strode confidently across the swaying deck of her ship, surrounded by pirates of all species scurrying to and fro across the ship, traversing up and down the rigging as though gravity was no longer a factor. "Hoist those sails! Tighten those knots! I want every inch of the *Sleight of Hand* prepped and ready for war!"

She marched over to a wooden grate in the deck and peered in. "Mr. King! How go the preparations of the cannons?"

A blue-masked panda snapped a salute at her as he hoisted a barrel of gunpowder over his shoulder. "They are advancing most satisfactorily, Miss Cooper. This exquisite black powder we collected from those British Navy ships will burn spectacularly."

"Excellent!" The pirate captain then glanced up and flagged down a mouse who was hanging on to the rigging. "Miss Penelope! What's our heading?"

Penelope worked a spyglass out of her toolbelt, extended it, and raised it to her eye. "We're making good time, Captain Cooper! I estimate we'll reach our destination in less than a minute!"

"That's what I like to hear!" Finally, the woman glanced over her shoulder at the other raccoon on the ship, this one a man in blue. "I appreciate all your help, Sly. Helping me rescue my ship, my crew..."

Sly raised a hand and waved her thanks off. "No problem, Henrietta. You're family, it's what we do. Besides, you helped me when you rescued Carmelita from the gallows." He flashed the named fox a rogueish grin as she passed by. "By the way, I'm still expecting a thank you ki-YIKES!" He hastily ducked under bolt of pure plasma.

"GET KEELHAULED, RINGTAIL!"

Henrietta 'One-Eye' Cooper chuckled as she watched the Interpol agent storm off. "Ah, she'll come around. Believe me, I oughta know."

"Thanks. So, do you think we're ready for this?"

"Are we ready? Are we ready!?" The pirate captain whipped her hook-shaped cutlass from her belt and brandished it in the air. "WHAT DO YOU SAY, MEN!? ARE YOU READY TO FIGHT AND DIE FOR OUR TREASURE!? FOR OUR FAMILIES!? FOR OUR HOME!?"

"AYE-AYE CAPTAIN!" The pirates roared in response, raising their weapons high.

"THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO HEAR!" Henrietta lowered her sword and smirked confidently at Sly. "Oh yes. I'd say we're ready."

Sly opened his mouth to respond-

"CAPTAIN!"

But was cut off by Penelope bellowing from the rigging.

"IT'S THE BLACK PLAGUE! BEARING DOWN ON US DEAD AHEAD!"

Both the Coopers glanced at each other momentarily before dashing across the deck, jumping and clambering over the hull until they reached the prow.

Before them was a behemoth of a ship, composed of plates of blackened steel, billowing out cloud after cloud of noxious smoke and studded with cannons. And there, standing right at the tip of its reaper-shaped figurehead, was its captain.

"AVAST COOPER, YOU BLEATING, YELLOW-BELLIED BAG OF VOMIT!"

Sly flinched as an old, cantankerous voice roared across the water via an array of massive speakers.

"YOU THOUGHT YOU'D SEEN THE LAST OF BLACK-SPOT PETE DID YA!? THOUGHT YOU'D PULL ONE OVER ON ME!? WELL NOT TODAY! TODAY, I RECLAIM MY OLD GLORY! TODAY, I HAVE MY VENGEANCE! FOR ME, AND FOR CANTANKEROUS TIM! MEN, TO ARMS! READY THE CANNONS!"

"You know, he might be a mean-spirited old fart of a pirate, but I can't help but feel sorry for the guy." Sly confessed. "He just wants to get his old glory days back. And, to be fair, I did impersonate his long-dead friend.

"Aye, that may be so," Henrietta growled. "But that old sea-dog took me men and me ship, conquered me home, and tried to leave me marooned. I've got no qualms sending him and that leviathan of his

to Davy Jones Locker! MEN!" She brandished her cutlass again. "PREPARE FOR BATTLE!"

"AYE AYE CAPTAIN COOPER!"

"FOR BLOOD BATH BAY!"

"ARRRRRR!"

"Haya no ideja ike no ibeya!"

"I know this seems a bit slap-dash, Guru, but without Sly, we don't have much of a choice! Besides, I'm sure this will work. It's worked hundreds of times in the past!"

"Idhee no igeya sikoho?"

"So I've watched a few Westerns recently. What's your point?"

"...igo."

"That's what I thought. Now, it's about noon, so if Kid followed the instructions we slipped into his meal, he should be on the other side of his cell. If my calculations are correct, and the guards you hypnotized put the explosives in just the right place, this should work. No time like the present! FIRE IN THE HOLE!"

BOOM!

I think that'll do for now, the thread's really gotten active lately. I'll get into 'Gang in Time' in a moment. Let's get the other Loops discussed first, shall we?

3.1: Good to see that even Anchors can be caught off guard.

3.2: Something to note with how Shepard's handled in the Loops. While almost every character has a base code to work

with for how they'll look in a Loop, Shepard's data got… scrambled. Basically he's got a completely different identity in each Loop, albeit still called Shepard. He could be human, Quarian, male, female, earthborn or spacer. The sky's the limit with him. I've seen a Loop where he was a Quarian, so I figured a Geth Collective was viable too. As for EDI, she's not a Looper, so when she ended up in Sly's world, she'd think everything was completely normal.

3.3: Where in Yggdrasil is Carmen Sandiego? Doesn't roll off the tongue as well, damn.

3.4: This one was partly me, partly Valentine in a way. I wondered what would happen if Sly took the Hate Chip from one Loop, and destroyed it while he was near Clockwerk in another one. While that idea was discussed, Valentine went and wrote that snippet. I can honestly say he took my idea and improved it, so kudos.

3.5: I like to think this happens during that jump between the parts of 3.4. Seems to fit.

3.6: Now we come to the Gang in Time Loop.

3.7: Hoo boy. From here, Xomniac's handling this Loop. When you get inspired, goddamn. I had intended to leave 3.6 where I'd ended it. You then extended it and turned it into what I consider to be one of the best Loops we've seen thus far. It's likely going to be the centerpiece for this set, and the next one at least.

I'll be back soon with Set 4!

Compilation Set 4

Well, another day, another batch of Loops. Let's go!

4.1 (Valentine Meikin)

"Sly, why am I dressed like this?" Carmelita literally growled out.

"We're in Arabian times, what did you expect to be wearing?" Sly asked.

"If your relative's men are more like the 40 perverts, I am going to cause us to end up in Eiken..." Carmelita snapped, "And when we get a gender switch loop, you are so wearing this getup..."

4.2

Well, this is going to be a nice relaxing Loop. For the most part, it was close to Baseline, and the Police HQ job was about three or four days away. Bentley had checked in with Sly, confirming that he was Awake, while Carmelita's check-in would be in a few days. Penelope would be joining them soon too if she was Awake, so everyone had a reasonable amount of time to group up if they were Looping for this one.

At least, that was the plan at first.

A huge crash alerted him to the fact that something was up. He grabbed his cane and ran out of his room.

"Bentley! Murray! You guys OK?" Sly asked as he searched, soon coming across Bentley, who was currently being bear hugged by Murray.

"Bentley! You… You're walking again!" Murray shouted, overjoyed.

"Murray, I've always been able to walk-"

"Wait a minute Bentley. Murray, what do you mean by again?" Sly asked, concerned.

"Well, he was in a wheelchair ever since he was hurt by Clock-La, right?" Murray replied.

Was this really happening at long last?

"Murray, I'm going to give you some names. Tell me what you know about the person I mention, OK?" Sly said, he needed to be sure, especially if this meant what he thought it did. "Octavio."

"The Mob Boss who was polluting Venice's rivers. When he knocked Bentley out of his wheelchair I beat the tar outta him."

"The Guru."

"You mean Master?" Murray asked. "He trained me in the Dream Time arts, and we helped him clear the miners out of his home."

At this point Bentley had caught onto what Sly was getting at, and he joined in. "Dr. M."

"That's the guy who worked with Sly's dad and went crazy over getting into the Cooper Vault. Come on guys, what's the problem?"

"We just needed to make sure of something. Last one Murray. Le Paradox." Sly replied.

"Used a time machine to try and steal the canes from Sly's ancestors, while making himself into Royalty." Murray said, "Sly went after him… and that was the last… time we saw you." He added, finally catching on. "SLY!"

He immediately put Bentley down and tackled Sly.

"What happened to you buddy?!"

"I ended up in Ancient Egypt. Of course, there was that one time where I ended up stuck around the Roman era. I'm certain of one thing now though Murray. Welcome to the Loops buddy. Me and Bentley are gonna have to fill you in. It's a bit confusing though, so if you've got questions, don't be afraid to ask, OK?"

"I'll get the stuff ready for the presentation. We've been waiting for a while for this to happen, Murray. You can't believe how happy we are to finally have you Looping." Bentley explained, as he left the room to get the presentation gear ready.

4.2 Addendum (Valentine Meikin)

"So, She's part of the Gang?" Murray asked, looking at Carmelita, who had changed into a feminine version of Sly's normal attire, except using a pair of tinted glasses instead of his normal mask, and a cane that resembled a nightstick.

"Official word if anyone actually asks is that I am a deep cover agent for Interpol who approached the Cooper Gang when you were in your infancy, crime gang wise, due to the investigation over Clockwerk mentioning heavily the Cooper family," Carmelita dictated almost as if by rote, "As far as Interpol are concerned, as long as I bring in people like the Fiendish Five, they don't care how I do it..."

"And her?" Murray asked, pointing to Penelope, "She..."

"...is planning to go full-time with Bentley sometime in the future, and has paid, more than enough, for her betrayal..." Sly replied cooly, "Within any capers, she and Carmelita handle communications and..."

"Clue Bottles..." Everyone but Murray sighed, as Sly took out a familiar looking bottle, except this one had a dark-colored liquid in it,

which he took a swig of, before the bottle seemingly vanished.

"Drinking game... Sly takes a drink from a repurposed clue bottle every time they come up," Carmelita offered, "Before you ask, it's not alcohol, because..."

"That was a bad, bad loop... Had to make Clockwerk self-destruct so I didn't foul up the entire caper..." Sly declared, "Since then, I've used prune juice..."

4.3 (Xomniac)

Gang In Time: Chapter 3

Sly groaned and shook his head, trying to reorient his thoughts. 'Wha-what happened...' Slowly, he raised his head and took in the situation.

He was on his knees, being held down by a pair of snarling dobermans wearing dark green uniforms and spiked helmets. A quick glance to his left showed him that the Panda King was in the same situation, restrained and barely conscious. On his right was a raccoon wearing a brown jumpsuit and a pair of aviator goggles who was also being held down. A large handlebar mustache hung from his lips, and a trickle of blood was running down his temple. The raccoon was moaning painfully, occasionally muttering out curses in Dutch.

'Otto van Cooper...' Sly realized numbly. 'That's right... Dimitri told us that this was where the next disturbance was. We went back to World War One, broke Otto out of a German prison. Penelope stayed behind while the three of us went to get Otto's plane... but then... it was a trap... we were ambushed... by...'

"BAHAHAHAHA! GUTEN TAG, LOSERS!"

Sly growled furiously as he raised his head to glare at the horribly familiar boisterous individual. "Muggshot..." He snarled.

The hundred-plus pound mutt let loose a bark of laughter at being identified. He towered above everyone present, friend and foe alike. The gangster king was wearing a uniform much like his lackeys, save that his was made of black leather and had a multitude of stars and medals pinned to it. The silver spike on top of his black helmet gleamed in the dark sky, along with the twin oversized Luger pistols hanging in their holsters at his side.

"So ya remember me, huh Cooper?!" The behemoth hound bellowed. "Thought you'd seen the last of ol' Muggshot back in Holland? THINK AGAIN! When Le Paradox offered me this here job screwing around with yer ancestors, I knew, I knew that ya wouldn't be able to help yerself! That you'd come sniffin' around and stickin' your nose in where it don'ts belong! Well..." He leaned in close to Sly, letting his rancid breath wash over him. "Who's laughin' now, punk?"

"Idiot..."

Muggshot snapped his head to the side, glaring at the prone form of the Panda King. "What'd you say to me?" He growled.

The pyro-technician slowly raised his head and glared at the hound, fire in his eyes. "I called you an idiot, Muggshot. That uniform you are wearing is from World War Two."

Muggshot blinked in surprise before looking over his uniform. "Oh, really? Huh, coulda sworn it was right, it just seemed to fit- WHO ASKED YOU!?" The mutt cut his musings off abruptly, roaring furiously and swinging a massive meaty fist around to impact with the Panda King, sending him flying across the ground.

"KING!" Sly shouted, trying in vain to wrench himself from the grasp of the two mutts restraining him.

The panda groaned in response, shakily trying to push himself to his feet.

"You know..." Muggshot snarled as he prowled towards the Panda King menacingly. "I never liked you. Back in the Five, you were always actin' condescending towards me. Always talkin' like yous was better then me. Now, I could take it from the boss. I could take it from that pipsqueak Raleigh, and I could even take it from Mz. Ruby. But you? Hell no!" He reeled back with one of his relatively small legs and sent a kick into the Panda King's gut, causing him to let out a whuff of air and fall back to the ground. "'Cause you know what? You're not better than me! We are exactly the same! When you get right down to it, we're both thugs. The lowest of the low, the meanest of the mean. We both started at the bottom, and we both clawed, kicked and fought our way to the top. And that is why..." He picked up the Panda King by the back of his neck and held him up so that they were face to cigar-chewing face. "I am givin' you this one, one! Chance to join me."

The Panda King blinked blearily in surprise. "W-what!?"

"You heard me. Join me. Come on, fuhget about Cooper! He's history, literally! Soon, the whole damn line will be wiped out, one by one, and then all that'll be left will be us! The greatest thieves that ever walked the Earth! So, waddaya say ol' friend?" Muggshot's lips slowly parted into a twisted, blood-thirsty grin. "You in?"

The Panda King ground his teeth together slowly as he searched for a response, his head wearily nodding from side to side. Suddenly, he froze, staring over Muggshot's shoulder and into the distance.

There, perched on a building at least half a mile away, was a massive creature of metal. It was hard to make out a distinctive shape in the dark night, but the piercing yellow eyes said it all.

'Clockwerk...' The Panda King realized numbly. In an instant, all he had ever done in the Fiendish Five flashed before his eyes. The money, the power, the respect...

But one thing stuck out. One memory took a hold of his mind and refused to let go.

Fear. The fear present in a young raccoon's eyes as he stared out of a closet in confusion, unable to comprehend the horrible, gruesome events playing out before him.

As quickly as it came, it passed.

Clockwerk was gone.

And the Panda King had his answer.

Slowly, he turned his head, met Muggshot's eyes defiantly, and said a single word.

"Never."

And with that, he spit in Muggshot's face.

"RRRRAAAAGH!" The massive mutt howled in fury, releasing the panda and swiping at his face. "YOU TWO-BIT NO GOOD SACK A SHIT!" Before the Panda King could even react, a hand shot out and wrapped itself around his neck, while the other whipped a pistol out and pressed it firmly between the ex-villain's eyes. "WHEN I'M DONE WITH YOU, I'M GONNA USE YOUR PELT TO PAD MY TANK!"

The Panda King struggled furiously to free himself, but was no match for Muggshot's might.

It seemed like this was the end...

RATATATATAT!

Then again, maybe not.

"YEARGH!" Muggshot yelped in pain, flinching back as a hail of bullets rained down around him, knocking the gun from his hand and

scattering his minions. "WHAT THE HE-ARGH!" The gangster threw himself to the ground, barely avoiding the propellers of a biplane that passed mere inches above him. "WHO THE HELL IS THAT!?"

Suddenly, the speakers that were on the surrounding buildings crackled to life, allowing a furious female voice to come over the air. "MUGGSHOT, YOU NO GOOD CHEATING PIECE OF DOG VOMIT! REMEMBER ME!?"

Muggshot blinked in confusion before finally placing the voice. "You... you're that pansy Black Baron's two-bit mechanic!"

"WRONG! I AM THE BLACK BARON!"

"WHAT!?" Muggshot howled furiously, his voice filled with rage.

"THAT'S RIGHT! IT WAS ME ALL ALONG! COME ON, MUGGSHOT! YOU WANTED A CHANCE TO FIGHT ME IN THE AIR? WELL COME ON! IT'S NOW OR NEVER! COME AND GET ME!"

Muggshot snarled in anger before letting loose a roar of outrage. "BOYS! GET MY BIPLANE READY! I'M GOING TO TEACH THAT BITCH A LESSON ABOUT MESSING WITH MUGGSHOT!"

And with that, the gangster hound and his men loped off towards a nearby hangar, leaving the rest of the Cooper Gang lying on the ground beaten and bruised.

Slowly, Sly got to his feet and made his way over to the Panda King, where he promptly sat down heavily. "Hey..." He groaned.

The Panda King glanced at Sly from where he was lying before redirecting his eyes towards the sky. "Hello."

"So... you really wouldn't join up with Muggshot."

The Panda King was silent for a moment before answering. "... I could not. The Panda King that was a part of the Five is now long

dead. I am... at peace with my past. This is my calling now. I owe you an unpayable debt... Sly. And I will gladly work alongside you until the end.

"I'm happy to hear that, Panda King. For now... let's just stay here until Penelope comes and gets us... or the world stops hurting."

"Agreed."

"All I ever wanted to do... was ice-skate!"

"... idoo no igeya."

"Alabalakoo ideya lo?"

"No Bob, I can't believe it any more than you."

4.4 (SeaofFallingStars)

When Sly woke up mechanical, he knew this loop was going to be strange. He was on a starship, and recognized most of his crew. He looked at Carmelita, no, Outfox, and wondered what sort of fused loop he was in. His memories were telling him he was Contail, an 'acquisitions' expert who was on probation from being caught by Carmelita. Bentley, Penelope, and Murray were also here, but his mind was telling him that they were Smartshell, Gearmouse, and Pincher Jaw. They all looked like they turned into vehicles, but had animal-themed names.

The the captain of the ship he was on spoke.

"This is Optimus Primal speaking. We're about to scan native life-forms to blend in and deal with Megatron and his Predacons. Be ready for getting used to an alternate movement style."

Sly felt his body change, saw the others change as well, and figured out where he was. Transformers, Beast Wars. Better than what it could've been.

Optimus Primal walked over to the quintet.

"Let me guess: new Loopers? Be prepared, as you'll have some trouble adapting to your animal form. Almost all sentient animals who loop in here do, except the ponies, who are used to both forms of movement. Contail, I'll see if your skills will enable you to get the stasis pods we dropped in orbit. Smartshell, Gearmouse, report to Rhinox for orders. Pincher Jaw, Outfox, you'll be working with Rattrap and Cheetor so we can beat the Predacons quickly this time."

In the Darksyde, a similar conversation was taking place.

"Iguanus, what is your problem?"

"Problem? Problem!? My style's cramped by this form bro, and I can't function without my style!"

Dinobot buried his beast mode's snout in a claw. This 'Dimitri' from Sly's universe was going to be an utter pain.

4.5 (Xomniac)

Gang in Time: Chapter 4

TrueZero's Note: Just prior to him submitting this Loop, I said '*Hmm, I'm really enjoying this Gang in Time set. You're going to have to get creative on both sides of the next lot though. No Penelope to act as the Black Knight.* '

Xomniac came back with this.

"Why thank you, Galeth," Penelope gloated as she tossed the lance-cane combo off to a passing jumpsuited rat. "I've been looking *all* over for this." She then hauled her suit's arm back and threw Galeth as hard as she could back the way he had come, planting him squarely between the rest of the gang.

Sly looked at his ancestor in horror, still trying to process what had just happened. As soon as they had landed in the Middle Ages, Penelope had disappeared and then *re-* appeared as the Black Knight! Somehow, the whole length of their travels through time, she had been making off to medieval times in order to wreak havoc and aid Le Paradox! It... it was inconceivable! How could things have *possibly* gone so wro-

CRUNK!

Suddenly, a grinding noise above him snapped Sly out of his thoughts and drew his attention towards swiftly lowering portcullis above him.

However, before he could even think to dodge, a massive black-furred paw wrapped itself around his midsection and tossed him back into the gatehouse.

The end result was the Panda King standing alone and free while the rest of the gang was imprisoned.

Penelope chuckled menacingly as she backpedalled her suit towards the massive pit behind her.

Galleth quickly clambered to his feet and stuck his arm through the gate, pointing after the villainous mouse. "She is making her escape!"

The Panda king bared his teeth as she stepped into the mech's giant cockpit. "No, she is not." In one swift move, he drew his twin canes, tossed up a firework and lit the fuse.

Penelope blew a raspberry at the panda... just as the projectile exploded mere feet in front of her, knocking the mouse unconscious and leaving her slumped forwards in her mechanical suit.

Sly, Galeth and Carmelita cheered victoriously from within their cell. "Nice going, Panda King! We've won!" The Cooper heir laughed.

The pyrotechnician snorted quietly before shaking his head. "No, we have not. Not yet."

Sly blinked in confusion. "What are you talking about?"

"I am talking about the fact that this battle is far from over." The massive bear slowly swept his gaze up and over the ramparts, scanning them silently. "Do none of you think it odd that in all the time we traveled with her, Penelope was still capable of building an empire in the Middle Ages without our notice? That she could have performed such an impossible task with ease, or lied to our faces so casually?"

"Uhh... well I... ergh! My head!" Sly whipped a hand to his forehead, wincing as a needle of pain suddenly shot through his mind. Carmelita imitated him, clawing at her forehead as she tried to escape the pain.

"What... what's going on?"

"Do not be afraid, Sly." The Panda King declared. "Your mind is just fighting to realize the truth. You see, we have been toyed with since the very beginning. Drawn into a tangled web of deceit."

"Hahahahaha..."

Sly, Carmelita and Galeth whipped their heads upwards in shock as a cold, ghostly laugh wafted its way through the air. Meanwhile, the Panda King merely stared forwards in cold resignation.

Galeth snapped his head to and fro in a panic. "What kind of sorcery is this!?"

Carmelita's fur paled as she began to shiver in fear. "S-sly... that voice..."

The modern raccoon shook his head in denial. "It can't be, it just *can't* ..."

The attention of the onlookers was drawn back to Penelope's overly large mech.

More specifically, to the slowly clapping figure perched on its shoulder.

"Well done, Mr. King, well done." She drawled in a heavily accented voice. "I must say, I am *most* impressed with your performance. Tell me, how did you manage to resist my sway for so long?"

The Panda King huffed imperiously and crossed his arms. "My daily meal consists of six inches of bamboo stalk and a cup of pure mountain spring water. Any additives to them, no matter how well hidden, stuck out to me like a blooming firework on the blank canvas of the night sky."

"Oh? And what of the lights that were incorporated into your binocucoms? I thought I'd perfected them to the point where the spices were a mere formality?"

The pyro technician closed his eyes, clapped his hands together, and bowed deeply. "My mind is a sanctuary. None may enter it against my will." He opened his eyes and glared furiously at the smirking woman before him. "Not even you, Contessa."

The spider-woman gave a deep laugh as she waved her hand at him. "Yes yes, I can see that Mr. King. Your mental fortuity is most impressive, most impressive indeed."

"The Contessa..." Carmelita breathed in horror. "You were hypnotizing us the entire time?"

"Indeed." The Panda King growled. "My apologies for not acting sooner, but when I noticed that none of you made any protests whenever Penelope decided to take a leave of absence, I thought it best to play along. The best way to catch a spider is to be at the very center of her web. I assume that this is also how Paradox acquired his own method of temporal travel?"

The Contessa's predatory grin grew ever wider. " *Most* impressive."

"But... that doesn't make any sense!" Sly protested. "If you could control us whenever you wanted, why didn't you just stop us from taking down the Cleopawtra Sisters or Pete or Muggshot? Why let us go so long unimpeded!?"

"Feh! Those fools?" The Contessa snorted dismissively. "Why should I aid them!? Weak, useless, the lot of them! No, better to let you trim the herd so that I might be left with the lion's share. And besides..." The hypnotist's grin grew ever wider. "Now I shall enjoy the pleasure of crushing you myself." And with that, she snapped her claws together.

Penelope's head jerked up in response, her eyes cold and devoid of emotion. Her arm jerked to the side, slamming a button. Both her suit and her mech's opening's sealed shut, and Project Overlord slowly rose out of the ground, carrying a cackling Contessa with it.

"Now you fools shall feel the might *of the Contessa!"*

The sole free Cooper Gang member snorted furiously as he solidified his stance. "No..." He drew his canes and set them alight, bellowing imperiously.

"Now *you* shall feel the fiery wrath *of the Panda King!"*

"Ah must extend me thanks to ye and yer friends Bentley. That there cheater would a' taken me 'ead off with that dem post if'n ya hadn't rescued me!"

"Don't worry, Slaigh, we know just how tricky that guy can be from personal experience. Seriously, you should have seen his descendant in the lumberjack games we participated in. Still though... I'm not sure *how* we're going to beat him! I mean, Jean Bison was Scottish Canadian, and he was a walking mountain! I can't even begin to *imagine* how we'll take down a pure Scotsman like Grant Bison!"

"Ach, don't you worry about *him,* Bentley. That monstrosity maght have taken me by surprise before, but now? A'm aff tae crack his skull open, smash his bones intae splinters, floss mah wallies wi' his spine, 'n' uise his guts as side-dishes *tae mah haggis! Na yin cheats in th' hielan games bit me!"*

"... guys?"

"Yeah Bentley?"

"Idoo?"

"Did either of you catch that last part?"

"Nope."

"Donoo."

"That's what I thought."

4.6 (Valentine Meikin)

Carmelita woke up to find herself only a few years old, with a similarly young Sly stood nearby. "See any adults?" Sly hissed, for

her to automatically shake her head, and she glanced to see Sly, Murray and Bentley going through what was their first ever heist. She let her loop memories settle, and found that her parents had been killed when investigating the attack on the Cooper family, and she'd ended up in the same orphanage as Sly, and her apparent role was the lookout. She also noticed Penelope was there, and she decided to make a list of which future members of the extended Cooper Gang were also inexplicably in the same orphanage.

After the Cookie Heist, she pulled the other four to her, and took out her nightstick cane. "This is the oddest wake-up I've had yet..." Sly declared, "Let me guess..."

"Find out who else is here..." Carmelita replied, "Then go have a minor accident with a certain remote..."

By the time they were old enough to attack the Fearsome Five, they were in complete disarray, due to the inexplicable death of their leader.

4.7

"We've got the next round of opponents for some of you! Ippo-kun, you'll be facing Karasawa in October. Manabu-kun, you know that you'll be facing Makino again in September. Murray-kun, since you're part of the OPBF, your next opponent is from India. He's listed only as Rajan. Your fight is scheduled for October as well; you'll be opening for Ippo."

"Sweet! Let's bring home the bacon, guys!" Murray cheered.

"Yeah, let's do it, Murray-san, Manabu-kun!" Ippo replied, as the three of them bumped fists.

After being given the 'Welcome to the Multiverse' speech, Ippo had taken Murray to the Kamogawa Gym, where he had quickly

established himself as a powerful boxer (it helped that Murray had lost a lot of his gut in the the transition from Hippo to Human). Unfortunately due to his being in the Heavyweight class, he had had trouble finding opponents. Switching from the JBF to the OBPF had resulted in a positive gain however, since he had been able to take on numerous strong fighters. Of course, he'd gotten in trouble a few times because of still being used to his fighting style from his home Loop.

After a few matches though, he'd been able to avoid using some of his non-punch attacks (He'd been chewed out by Coach Kamogawa for using the Thunder Flop once), and once he had gotten those mistakes dealt with, he had become a force to be reckoned with.

In fact, he had managed to create a new move to act as his Sunday Punch.

"And a devastating uppercut from Rajan! Things are looking bad for Murray!" shouted the commentator as Rajan's punch sent him stumbling backwards a little bit.

'ALRIGHT. I'M DONE PLAYING!' Murray thought to himself, as he braced himself for another shot from his old foe.

As Rajan moved closer to throw another large uppercut, he found that Murray had expected that, and was decked by an overhand counterblow that sent him to the ground, unconscious. The part that had caught the people watching off guard was the sound of the punch when it impacted. To them, it had sounded like a clap of thunder.

"Oh yeah! I call that the Thunder Knuckle!" Murray shouted, as he went to one of the neutral corner.

A few moments later, the bell rang, and Murray had been declared the victor.

His goal was simple. Become the OPBF Heavyweight Champion, and he was one step closer to the mark.

He did wonder how Sly and Bentley were doing though.

"I was waiting to knock your block off Octavio. Going after my buddy Bentley? You just gave me an excuse, you bastard!" roared the tiger that had filled in for Murray this time around.

Say what you will, but Takeshi Sendo had been a good enforcer for the gang, and fiercely loyal to boot. Sly has glad to have him on board this Loop.

Now if only Sendo and Carmelita were able to get along, things would be golden. Alas, according to his memories, that one time he'd pissed her off had ultimately soured their relationship to a point where they would only look out for one another if they absolutely had to.

4.8 (Valentine Meikin)

Sly looked at the setup that Bentley had wired up, looking at the odd looking console that was hooked up to a cinema projector that had been... borrowed from a rundown cinema.

"So, what's this here for?" He asked.

"I admit that I was surprised when Carmelita and I were in a human loop, since we found that our information on the four cases we most often repeat was out of date..." Bentley stated, "The Playstation 2 we went in to... purchase had been discontinued,"

"So, what exactly is a PS3?" He stated, tapping the characters etched into the sliding panel on the top of the console.

"It's the successor to the PS2, and it had all four cases available for it," Bentley stated, "Penelope, Have you seen the Vita?"

"I have two questions..." Penelope said, as she walked in with a handheld computer of some kind,

"One, Are your first two capers why you have a sign on the lair's noticeboard stating 'The only bottles allowed in the lair are drinks', and Two, Why am I your enemy in both the games I'm in?!"

Both Sly and Bentley exchanged a look as if to say, "How are we meant to answer that?"

4.9

"Penelope, you want to know why we hate Clue Bottles so much?" Sly asked. "Because thanks to all this, we have a way to let you experience it."

"What, you want me to play the games?" Penelope replied. "Alright, I guess..."

"Mainly these two." Sly said, passing her the one that covered the Le Paradox caper, and gesturing to the 'Band of Thieves' graphic on the front of the collection disc. "The ones in the Thievious Raccoonus case aren't quite so bad, especially the really linear areas. Well, there are a few exceptions later on, the most annoying thing there is that sometimes the vaults for each area are near the beginning. These two games though? They take the difficulty when it comes to the Clue Bottles, and they jack it up as far as it'll go. I will say though, go through all four, it really helps."

"Alright then. Thinking about it there's got to be some kind of pattern to it, it'll probably take a week or so given that I'll be completing each game as I go." Penelope replied as she sat down to start the first game.

A few weeks passed, and Penelope had beaten the first game with relative ease. A few of the challenge maps had annoyed her, and Sly had noticed her muttering 'Stupid crabs' to herself a little bit before she beat Raleigh. He guessed which level she was referring to immediately, after all, it had tripped him up too, and Carmelita as well. After about four or five days though, Penelope declared that she'd beaten the first game and gotten all the trophies for it.

The real problem though was when she decided to get all the Clue Bottles for the second game after she'd beaten the story. Suffice to say, the room with the console had been rendered off limits whenever she was in there.

"I CAN FLY A BIPLANE! I CAN BUILD A GODDAMN GIANT MECHANICAL KNIGHT AND PILOT IT WITH EASE! I'VE DUELED WITH A PIRATE CAPTAIN AND WON, AND I'VE BUILT A WORKING TIME MACHINE! WHERE THE HELL IS THAT LAST FREAKING BOTTLE!?"

The part that made things worse? The vault she'd unlock after getting it was Dimitri's. She still had the next seven hub worlds to clear out.

"GAAAHHHH!"

So with that, I think we can end this Set.

4.1: Bentley's best plan ever, Looper-version.

4.2: Murray's available for Looping now!

4.3: We always seem to work in Muggshot somehow. Probably because when you work it all out, he's one of the most frequently appearing villains.

4.4: Dimitri's not Awake yet, this just happens to be how he turned out in the Fused Loop, like when EDI ended up in Sly's

Loop. If you end up in another Loop and you aren't Awake, you think it's all normal.

4.5: I learned to never challenge Xomniac. Tempting fate right there.

4.6: Young Carmelita. Hmm, could be an interesting variant to visit every so often.

4.7: I'm fan of Hajime no Ippo, so I wanted to do something involving them. Sendou became a tiger due to his Epithet, 'Naniwa Tiger'.

4.8: An offscreen Hub Loop results in the gang getting a Playstation and their games. Hilarity ensues.

4.9: Eiken may be a bad Loop to end up in, but I say that having to collect Clue Bottles every Loop is a pain in the backside too.

Compilation Set 5

Well, last time was the longest set, this one's got the most snippets. Here's 17 of them for ya. As normal, if it's not got a user name next to the Loop Number, then it's one by me.

5.1 (Sea of Falling Stars)

The looping gang was watching Sly play through the Haitian bayou to fight Mz. Ruby. Upon reaching her, they could all agree on one thing:

She talked too much and too slow. Thankfully, Sly's skills with the controller and Ninja Spire jump meant that...

"Oh come on, that didn't happen! And that was my last life. Grr."

Restarting the level, they all winced as Mz. Ruby's speech. This time Sly made it through the snapping maw to the fight itself. And again, things irked everyone.

"I did not have to dodge the buttons! And what is the music no synched to the dancing I'm doing!?"

Sly was losing coherent speech, while the others were speechless at how strange the fight itself was. Penelope dared to speak up.

"I take it this wasn't the most pleasant of places for you?"

Unanimously, the group agreed with the question.

5.2 (Valentine Meikin)

"No," Sly stated as they took a break from the games.

"Why can't we induct them into the expanded Cooper Gang?" Penelope asked.

"If we invited every single one of our enemies as soon as they became Loop-Aware, we'd end up with more members than we know what to do with," Sly explained, "You were given membership since Bentley wouldn't have it any other way..."

"And I was given membership since I wouldn't let him say 'No'," Carmelita offered.

"And if we did it to everyone, what would happen when Clockwerk became Loop-Aware?" Sly demanded.

Everyone went quiet. The point was made.

5.3

"Hey, Carmelita."

"Yeah Sly?"

"You know, all these Loops, all this time we've been married, there's one thing we never really looked into." Sly said, "We never did work on helping you learn the skills from the Cooper Clan."

"Which skills are we talking about?" Carmelita replied, as Sly opened up this Loop's Thievious Raccoonus.

"Let's start with two simple ones, then we'll work our way up, shall we? So here we go, the Climbing Technique and the Wall Slide. While these two moves may seem pretty trivial, they help with one special trait." Sly explained, "You see, a Cooper that's learned certain techniques from the book can subconsciously tell what these

techniques can be used on at a glance, because those areas become 'marked' with a blue aura that only we can see."

"So, you see blue auras everywhere?" Carmelita asked.

"Only when I'm in the field and on the job. You know how in Naruto's Loop, there are techniques that give a person's sight a special trait? It's a similar concept here, albeit more in the sense that you can turn the auras off if you want to. Part of the training for these techniques deals with practicing that sensing trick."

"I see, alright then Sly, let's give it a try."

5.4 (Valentine Meikin)

After some time, Carmelita blinked, before declaring "It's not blue... I can see what you probably mean, but, for me, it's not blue..."

"Hmm?" Sly asked, confused by the fact she wasn't seeing the 'tells' as a blue aura.

"We'll have to ask the Cooper Ancestors what colour the aura is, Sly..." Bentley offered, "I have a theory..."

5.5

"So let me get this straight. The three of you are thieves."

"Yep, that's right Garrus." Sly replied, with Bentley and Murray nodding in agreement. "We limit ourselves to stealing from other thieves though, for the most part. No challenge or fun in stealing from regular people."

Garrus checked his Loop memories for information on this one. Apparently he was a member of Interpol's forces that had typically chased after the Cooper gang for a while now, and unlike his home Loop, he wasn't Turian anymore. He had become a bird of some description. Bentley would later show him that he had become a crow. His equivalent to Carmelita's Shock Pistol was the same kind of weapon, just based on a sniper rifle instead of a pistol.

"You know; if I wasn't Awake for this, I'd probably be trying to arrest you right about now." Garrus said, looking himself over. "So how do these Loops normally go?"

"Well, first off there's the Fiendish Five, a bunch of criminals that killed my parents and stole my family's greatest treasure." Sly explained.

"There should be a file in your office safe on the group." Bentley added, "Following that, there's the Klaww Gang incident. There's one moment we typically take measures to avoid if any of us can help it right at the end of that one."

"And that is?" Garrus asked, looking like he'd raised an eyebrow.

"Right after we finish off the last of the Klaww Gang, we need to get hold of this one part from what they'll try to build." Murray replied.

"It's a computer chip of sorts, fuelled by unrelenting hatred." Sly added. "We have to break it to make sure that the thing they build can't come back."

"Why aren't the three of you telling me what their final plan is?" Garrus asked.

"We figure that the first time a Looper enters our world, we'll give them a basic rundown, but we'll normally leave out some of the surprises." Sly replied, "Anyway, the thing we try to avoid is an injury that Bentley would receive in the Baseline."

"Long story short, getting the Hate Chip is the last time I'm not in a wheelchair." Bentley added, a little sullen. "Thanks to Sly though, and Murray when he's Awake, we're normally able to keep that from happening."

"We get the occasional misses on that goal, but about 9 times out of 10 we're able to keep him from being wheelchair bound." Sly finished.

"Hmm, looks like I've got a lot to look forward too." Garrus replied. "So, you want me to join you for this one, or are we playing Cops and Robbers?"

"If you're willing to give us the file either way, it's up to you." Sly said with a grin. "Could be interesting to face an Inspector that's a non-native Looper."

"Hmm, I'll get back to you on that." Garrus replied, as he left to give it some thought.

5.6

"Erm… Sly?"

"Yeah Murray?"

"I don't think I like Penelope as a cop." Murray replied.

"Same here Murray. Same here." Sly agreed.

"Less talking, more running!" Bentley said, as the three of them were frantically trying to get as far away from Penelope as they could.

For the most part, it was close to baseline. There was one key difference though. Penelope and Carmelita, neither one Awake for this Loop, had switched roles, but oddly enough, not love-interests.

Skills also hadn't changed between them, so Penelope was chasing the three of them through Tsao's territory, and she was piloting a large mechanical wolf.

"Get back here Cooper! You're under arrest!" Penelope shouted, firing another volley of flashbangs.

5.7

"Alright, nobody move! We received a report from the building across the way; the caller claims that they witnessed a murder. Please bear with us while we investigate, and I ask that you cooperate with us."

This was an interesting Loop for Carmelita. No Sly and the Gang, but she was human for this one. The catch was that she'd Looped in as an Inspector from the city's police force. From the look of her Loop memories, she was one that had a tendency to jump to conclusions, but ultimately got the right culprits. She'd also discovered that her name here was Carly Foxx.

Well, she'd be going all out this time around.

"Men, cordon off this room and start the investigation!" She shouted, as she approached the victim's corpse and the girl that was knelt beside it.

"Hey, are you alright?" Carmelita asked, placing her hand on the girl's shoulder. "I'm Carly. What's your name?"

"M-Maya… my sis… why'd someone decide to kill her?!" Maya replied, struggling to keep herself from breaking down right there.

"I don't know, but I intend to find out." Carly replied. "Come on, let's sit down and calm you down a little, I'm afraid that right now I need to gather all the evidence I can, and part of that means that I need your statement."

She turned to the man that had been in the room when she entered.

"Is there anywhere that we can use to sit down and talk?"

"Yeah, right over here." The man replied, leading Carmelita and Maya over to a small furniture suite.

"My name's Phoenix Wright. I work here, and the victim was both my employer and my mentor, Mia Fey."

"Ok, thanks for your assistance. I'd like to take a statement from you as well, see if we can get an idea on what's going on."

After Phoenix had given his statement, he and Carmelita had managed to help Maya calm down enough to give hers.

"Detective Foxx! We believe that we've found incriminating evidence!" One of the officers that had been investigating said, presenting Carmelita with a clear plastic bag with a scrap of paper inside. On the paper, written in blood, was Maya's name.

"Not good. Maya, I'm afraid that right now, I've got to take you to the station for further questioning. I wish that there was some other way, but this evidence points to you, so my hands are tied." Carmelita said before turning to an officer. "I'd like you to escort Miss Fey to the detention center. Treat her carefully. She's a suspect yes, but keep in mind that she's not fully fit for questioning at this time. She needs some time to calm down."

With a salute, the officer approached Maya.

"Please, come with me, Miss."

As the officer led Maya out of the office, Phoenix turned to Carmelita.

"That's more care than the usual detective takes during this case. So, how're you enjoying this Loop?" He asked.

"I had a feeling that you were a little too calm. It's different from the norm for me, but it'll be good to do a little police work for once. Looper?" Carmelita replied.

"Anchor," Phoenix replied, "and to be perfectly honest, this never really gets any easier to deal with. After all, Mia was my mentor in the Baseline. I can tell you though that Maya is innocent. The call was made by the killer's accomplice."

"Alright then, where do we start?" Carmelita asked.

"I thought you were the detective on this case?"

"I'm the Inspector, yes. I should be able to set things up so that Maya receives you as her Attorney, and then I'll work to help you where needed. I'm not about to let an innocent girl be declared a murderer." Carmelita replied, "Now if you'll excuse me, I've got some paperwork to deal with and a young girl to help. I'll see you at the detention centre, but you should probably head there now."

With that, Carmelita left the room, leaving Phoenix in there on his own.

"Huh. This Loop seems like it'll be-" Phoenix started, as Carmelita poked her head back into the room.

"Erm, Phoenix? I kind of need you to come with me. I got a little carried away there."

Yeah, this would be an interesting Loop alright.

"On my way Inspector." Phoenix replied. "We've got a job to do."

5.8

"So, let me get this straight. This 'Ping' ability lets us know if there are other Loopers that are Awake in a given Loop?" Sly asked, "You know, I'm surprised that never came up."

"How'd yer branch work out who was Loopin' then? I figured you'd picked it up before the two of us met." Zeke asked. Unlike the last time that Sly had Looped into Empire City, he was the only representative from his world. No Carmelita to meet up with.

"Well since we normally have time to kill before the events really kick off, then we typically just meet up. Everyone had their scheduled arrival points." Sly explained, "For Bentley and Murray, they'll just start by telling me flat out that they're Awake. For Carmelita she'll let me know before the first job of the Loop, and she'll join up properly when we grab the file on the Fiendish Five. Penelope's then the last one to join in more often than not because she'll meet us on the way to the Welsh Triangle."

"You guys have a *Welsh* Triangle?" Zeke asked, confused.

"Weather machine causing massive storms and thus, wrecking a lot of ships. It clears up after we leave."

"Ah, gotcha. Right then, time to teach you how to Ping!" Zeke finished, clapping his hands together.

5.9

"And CUT!"

Those were not the words that Sly expected to hear upon Awakening. As his Loop Memories settled in, things were… different to say the least.

Apparently, in this world, his adventures as a thief were all part of a Live Action TV Show, 'The Adventures of Connor Cooper'. Odd that

they ended up using his dad's name. Regardless of what he thought, they were filming the first season finale, the final battle with Clockwerk.

"Alright, let's get ready for the death ray climb!" The director shouted, as various set pieces were set up against a green screen. "Alright Cooper, you ready?"

"Just let me have a drink first, and then I'll be good to go!" Sly replied. According to his memories, this director was fairly lenient when it came to stuff outside of filming, but he took filming very seriously.

"Alright, make it quick though, we need to get this scene finished before we can go."

One thing Sly thoroughly enjoyed about this Loop was that Clockwerk was little more than a CGI model and a voice actor. This would definitely be a fun Loop, and hopefully one where he could get some good rest in.

5.10 (Valentine Meikin)

Carmelita looked at the man who had replaced Sly this loop. He'd somehow got out some kind of rail with a trigger attached, which was for a massive cannon that materialized, dropped down and docked with the rail, creating one of the largest things that could still be called a gun she'd ever known.

"Umm... Rocket, where did you get that from?" She asked, curiously, as she noticed text etched into one side reading 'Stark Industries Proton Cannon'.

"It was just something I had in my pocket..." Rocket offered, lining up Clockwerk with the cannon. He then fired, going flying backwards. The immortal robot bird had no chance... and nor did the area

between him and the raccoon that had fired at him... or at least a foot behind him. The cannon vanished as fast as it had appeared, Rocket looking dazed, but giving a thumbs-up.

"What else do you have in your pocket?" Carmelita asked.

When Sly returned to his home loop, Carmelita looked at him with worry.

"Sly. If you ever see anyone named Rocket when looping, looks like a raccoon... Don't ask him about what weapons he's carrying," Carmelita asked, as she handed him a sheaf of paper that was an inch thick, "This is as far as I got in cataloguing it before he left..."

5.11 (Kingofsouls)

Twilight levitated a teacup as Rarity did the same, the two enjoying their girl time together. "Enjoying it Rarity?"

"To be honest Twilight, Raspberry isn't exactly my favourite." Rarity replied with a sip of her tea.

Twilight just smiled as she took a sip of her tea. "Wait for it."

"If you say so." Rarity took another sip of her tea, her face quickly contorting in surprise. "Twilight, it could be my imagination, but my tea seems to have changed flavours."

"Which flavours?"

"Peach." Twilight grinned as she clapped her hooves. "I take it you planned this."

"Zecora wanted me to try a new blend of tea she created. It changes flavours even so often."

"Interesting."

The conversation paused at that moment, the two ponies simply relaxing. The Awake Loopers had decided that this Loop would be a vacation loop. Many of the Loopers needed it.

"So, got any plans for this loop?" Twilight asked as she levitated a notepad, jotting down some notes.

"Honestly? I don't. Though I did want to go on a trip with Spike. I hear..."

"RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!"

The unicorns turned their heads so spot two ponies, one an earth pony with blue fur and grey mane and tail, the tail with three white rings while the other was a brownish-orange furred, blue maned unicorn running for their lives. Both of them had canes, the blue one's cane held in his tail somehow and the female's cane, which more of a nightstick than a cane, was held in her telekinesis.

Both of them leaped onto trash cans and tables, reaching the roof. At that moment, Cadence flew into view, a manic grin on her face as she cased the two ponies.

"COME BACK! YOU BOTH NEED ME!"

"SHE'S GAINING RINGTAIL!"

"RIGHT, CHANGING GRAVITY!"

And with that, the two ponies leapt into the air and practically flew towards a mountain in the distance, continuing their escape from the pursuing Alicorn.

"Twilight?"

"Yes Rarity?"

"Why is Cadence chasing Sly and Carmelita?"

"Apparently they got married during the Loops without a ceremony, and Cadence found out."

5.12 (Kingofsouls)

Chrom raced through the castle, Falchion in hand. He skidded to a stop as he entered the corridor and turned. Before him was an enemy, a Fighter if Robin's terminology was correct. The Fighter shouted as he charged the Prince, eager to cut the prince down with his axe.

With a quick slash, Falchion tore through the brigand, his life escaping him as he fell to the ground. With that, Chrom sheathed Falchion as he looked around.

Normally there was someone else with the Fighter...

"Looking for something?"

Chrome looked up to see crouching up in the rafters a youthful man despite the gray color of his hair. He bore a simple mask, and underneath the typical cloak of a thief was blue clothing that seemed out of place. A cane with a large crook in the shape of a C was in his hand. Dangling at the end of the crook was a bag. Chrome reached behind him, the object his hand was reaching for missing.

"I take it you're not Gaius." Chrome asked. The man slid down the pillar, landing gently.

"Depends on who you ask. Sly Cooper. Master thief." Sly reached his hand, Chrom taking it with vigour.

"Prince Chrom of Ylisse. Welcome to the Fire Emblem Loop."

"Thanks for having me. Are you the Anchor?"

"No. That would Robin, tactician for the Shepherds and my best friend. Are you your Loop's Anchor?"

"Guilty." Sly tossed the bag back Chrom, who deftly caught it. "So, what's the general plan in this loop?"

"I'll explain once things settle down, but right now? We're attempting to stop a man named Validar from murdering my sister, the Exalt." Sly's smile turned into a dour frown. "I take it you're familiar?"

"My parents were murdered before my eyes when I was eight. I'm familiar with losing family. It's something I wouldn't wish on anyone.

"As long as I'm here, this Validar will not succeed. He'll wind up behind bars if I have anything to say about it."

The ringing of unsheathed steel echoed in the hall of castle Ylisse. "I was planning something more violent."

Sly balked at that. "Uh, sorry but I'm not a huge fan of murder."

"Sly. We're in a war. Both sides want the other dead. I'm sorry but here, it's something that simply must be done." Chrom replied, laying his hand on Sly's shoulder.

"Well, I guess I don't have much choice. When in Rome."

At that moment, two men garbed in exotic clothing that bore a skull like hood identifying themselves as Plegian Dark Mages ran up the nearby stairs, and stopped as soon as they saw the prince and their thief having a friendly chat. With a shout of "Traitor!" they each pulled a purple spellbook out of their robes, their free hands covered in eldritch energy.

Chrome simply pointed his ancestral weapon at the Dark Mages. "Tell me Sly; are you any good with that cane?"

"You any good with that sword?"

With that, the Thief and the Lord charged at the Dark Mages, the Plegians firing their spells at their enemies.

"Look, I'm always up for wanton thievery, but the theft of any all sweets, especially those covered in chocolate, come first."

Carmelita and Bentley simply facepalmed as the replacement for Sly, a raccoon with orange red fur and a black version of Sly's clothing played with his cane, a large pile of sweets behind him.

He didn't seem to be Awake either, which likely meant a Stealth Anchor.

It was going to be a long Loop.

5.13 (Kingofsouls)

Sly stared at the Tactician before him, his appearance being a young man with silver hair and impressive robes. The tent they were in was simple, having just a table with several scrolls on it. "You are rather skilled at this Sly. I'm impressed."

"Aw thanks. You're gonna make me blush." Sly reached into his subspace pocket, and pulled out another object, this a black box with cords. "I'll add this to the pile if you add yours."

"I'm actually quite fond of this." Robin said as he pulled a similar but smaller object out of his pocket.

"My family heirloom is something I'm fond of too. Hence the steep price."

"I know you have more than one." Robin eyes narrowed in a smug but playful manner. "A person like you would carry a spare just in case."

"Hey, just because I have a few spares of my father's cane doesn't mean any of the spares are worth any less than the others spares. It just means I have more canes to remember him by."

"That is rather heartfelt." Robin thought for a moment, eying his prise. "But if it means so much to you, why trade away even one?"

"To be honest, it just feels right." Sly conceded. "Besides, I marked my baseline cane. That one is the one I never take out of my pocket. I wouldn't want to lose it."

"Okay then. It's agreed. My Fire, Wind, Thunder, and Flux tomes, a Dread Scroll, a Bride's Bouquet, and my spare 3DS with my game in it, for your cane, a list containing the locations of all the clue bottles and safe combinations should I ever loop into your Loop, and a PS2 complete with the first three Sly Cooper games."

Robin motioned to the items as he spoke. On his side were four tomes (red, green, yellow, and purple respectively), a scroll, a bouquet of flowers, and a small black rectangle with a smaller grey rectangle next to it. On Sly's side was a Cooper Cane next to a large box with three smaller ones on top, cords wrapped around all of them. "Deal?"

Sly reached his hand out, Robin taking it and shaking it "Deal."

As the two exchanged items, placing their new items inside their pockets, Sly spoke up. "Just got one question. Your loop hasn't invented anything that uses electricity. How do you charge your 3DS?"

"Levin Sword." This got Sly's attention. "They're magical swords that shoot lightning. I get them whenever I see an Anna selling them. I have to be careful not to overload my 3DS though."

"Anyway, thanks for helping a fellow New Lopper out Robin." Sly got up, as Robin did the same. A look emerged on his face. "I got an

idea. The next time a bunch of Loopers get together in one loop, we could have a massive trading thing. Like a bazaar."

"Hmm... Bazaar of the Bizarre…" Robin mused. "I like it. Especially considering that it'd be a great chance to meet some of the younger Loopers like us, who haven't explored the multiverse as much as the older Loopers. Though honestly I think it would just be an excuse for you to get some five finger discounts."

"There's no challenge in stealing from honest people. Anyone can steal, but if you can steal from a criminal? That's when you know you're a master thief."

"Gaius would probably disagree. As he puts it, he's being paid to have double standards."

That got a laugh out of both of them.

"Hey guys. What are doing?"

Thief and Tactician let out a pair of high-pitched screams, Sly leaping all the way to the top of the tent. As soon as he landed, he took a look at the visitor, whom was a tall man with the plaintext face you could imagine wearing heavy silver armour with blue trim. "Oh, uh hey Kellam. Uh, how are you?"

"Oh I'm going great. How about you Robin."

"The same."

At this point, Sly recovered from his rough landing. "When did you get in here?"

"About 15 minutes ago. I'm pretty sure I spoke loud enough. Then I walked in, though I did knock several of the scrolls of the table. I've been standing here ever sense, watching you trade these strange items."

At that, Sly was mildly insulted. "So, exactly how does a man wearing at least sixty pounds of armour sneak past two people?"

"Honestly I've been trying to figure that out for years." Robin sighed. "I dread the moment Twilight meets him."

5.14

"Yes. This ordnance will suffice."

It was a fairly standard Fused Loop. Twilight had replaced Bentley, and was acting as mission control for the Gang. They were preparing to rescue the Panda King's daughter, which required the use of a large amount of fireworks to cut off one of their opponent's main tools.

"Sly, I really hope that if the Panda King starts Looping, he doesn't meet Trixie." She said to her host over the Binocucom. "That's an Eiken Loop waiting to happen."

5.15 (Kingofsouls)

Sly Awoke, and didn't like what he felt. His body was made of cold metal, and by reflex he spread his wings. Ungodly amounts of hatred flowed through his very being, the very concept of hate his lifeblood.

It had finally happened.

Sly Cooper had looped in as Clockwerk. Nothing could be worse than that.

Sly made a very hasty exit from his lair to end the loop.

Carmelita entered the hideout, garbed in her Cooper clothing. Bentley was on Thief-Net, his eyes narrowed as he looked at his screen. Sitting in a chair near a door was Murray, guarding it from something. "Anyone felling Loopy?"

Bentley tore his eyes from the screen, looking at the Interpol agent with distrust. "Uh, no..."

"I am." Murray looked up at Carmelita, concern in his eyes. He got up from his seat, and motioned for Carmelita to come closer. She did so, and spoke to Murray with a whisper. "Murray, what is going on? No one checked in with me when I Awoke. I honestly thought something was the matter."

"You got that right." Murray whispered back. "When me and Sly Awoke, he was shaking. Badly. Like he'd been through something horrible. He just locked himself him the room."

Sly was a thief by trade. A job like that required steel nerves and a cool head. For something to cause him to be this shaken must have been horrible.

"As soon as he did that, Bentley started looking up anything related to PTSD. Now, I'm not as used to these Loops as you or Sly, but it's clear he needs you more than me." With that, Murray unlocked the door, Carmelita entering the room dreading what awaited her.

Carmelita's dread was justified.

Sitting on the bed illuminated only by moonlight was Sly Cooper, shaking. His eyes were widened, his pupils shrunk to comical levels, and he was devoid of any clothing.

Carmelita rushed towards her husband, embracing him. At first, Sly shouted, attempting to escape.

"Sly! Sly, it's Carmelita."

The words calmed him as his eyes adjusted, noticing his visitors identity. He calmed himself, returning the embrace.

Several minutes passed, Sly calming down. He was still visibly shaken, but at the moment it was clear he was able to communicate without a fearful reflex.

"Sly...what happened?"

"My worst fear." Sly grabbed a glass of water and consumed it, the water dripping off his face as he clumsily tried to drink it. "I looped in as Clockwerk."

No words escaped Carmelita's lips as Sly looked at her in desperation. "I know what you're thinking. 'Was it that bad?' No, Carmelita, it wasn't that bad.

"It was worse. Much worse.

"There was nothing but hate. Pure, unrelenting hate. I hated everything. I wanted everything to wither away, just so I could spite it. When I was trying to find the nearest volcano to dive into, thoughts just...poured into me. Horrible thoughts about how I just wanted to end everything, how nothing just deserved to exist. Nothing mattered.

"Even if I had managed to destroy the Cooper Clan, it wouldn't have changed anything. There would have been something else to hate. I remembered the day he and the Five killed my parents. Do you know what was going through his head then? Horrible images as to what he was planning to do to me if he ever got his talons on me. What he wanted to do to me was much worse that what he did to my parents.

"I'm not sure how long I can hold out Carmelita. These time loops are going to break me if being Clockwerk again doesn't. If it happens again, I may just break... for good."

"Don't say that..."

"Carmelita, I became the thing that ruined my childhood, possibly my life. Just... just don't okay?" There was no malice in his words. With nothing left to say, Carmelita simply embraced Sly, hoping her body would calm her husband's.

Unbeknownst to the Coopers, Murray had cracked open the door, hearing the whole conversation. What Sly went through was a fate Murray would not wish on anything.

"Kind of hard to imagine the pain a friend is going through, especially when you can't do anything to fix it." Bentley mused. Images of baseline flashed in Murray's mind, Clock-La striking Bentley and forcing him into that damned wheelchair.

"Yea, it is..."

5.16 (Kingofsouls)

"Sly, you have that look."

"What look?"

It was true: Sly had *that* look plastered on his face.

"Sly..."

"Alright, alright, you got me." Sly conceded. He began to reach into his subspace pocket, rummaging for something. "I did a little souvenir shopping. And I found these for you."

At that, Sly pulled four tomes out of thin air and gave them to his wife. Tentatively, she set all but one down, and opened it. Mystical words in a mystic tongue adorned the pages.

There were also pictures of fireballs. "What are these, and where did you get them?"

"Tomes. A few loops ago I wound up in the Fire Emblem Loop. I ended up replacing a fellow thief called Gaius."

At that, Carmelita moaned as she reached into her pocket, a Polaroid picture emerging. "Was it this guy?"

Although the species was different, it was clear who it was. "Yea, that's him. I take it he caused a few mishaps?"

"He was in my last loop." Carmelita moaned. "He went by Guy Cooper, and he took every opportunity to steal sweets and chocolates instead of the important stuff. I swear he was taking every opportunity to derail the script. Bentley and I eventually had to do every on script job without him.

"I couldn't tell if he was Awake or not..."

"I'd best keep that answer to myself for now" Sly thought to himself. "Anyway, I thought since you have Equestrian unicorn magic, maybe widening your spell variety would be a good idea."

A golden aura encased both Carmelita's free hand and the yellow tome, the book hovering in front of her, opening on its own. "Thunderbolts? That is a good idea. Thanks." She kissed her husband, whom returned the affection. "Any other goodies for me?"

"As a matter of fact, I do." A bouquet of flowers emerged from the pocket. "A lovely bouquet of flowers for a lovely lady."

"You are such a romantic Ringtail." Taking the flowers, Carmelita was enraptured by their simple beauty. "They're...wait, a card?"

"What does it say?"

"It says 'Benedictione deae munus praedico in corde tuo fortitudo pulcrae'. But what does..."

Bentley and Murray were simply lounging about. They were a bit uncomfortable with Carmelita apparently a member of the gang, but Sly assured them it wasn't a trick.

A burst of white light illuminated the cracks of the closed door, and the two rushed to it, opening the door with urgency.

What awaited them was a surprise, stunned silence their answer.

"What...Was that?"

"You might want to look in the mirror honey." Sly tried to suppress a cocky grin. He was failing. With a curious look, Carmelita a turned to the mirror, and her jaw dropped. She was now garbled in a soft white-blue wedding dress with gloves going past her elbows.

At this point, Sly had a hard time keeping his smug expression in.

"COOPER!"

5.17 (Masterofgames)

Inspector Carlos Fox presently was undecided on if he wanted a good, stiff drink, or just to beat his head against the wall and get straight to the hangover.

"Just... Just why?"

Sylvia Cooper, professional exotic dancer and official 'Distraction' of the Cooper Gang just smirked and thrust her chest out as she continued to dance teasingly, her silks flowing around her.

"Hey, don't get angry just because I wear this better than you."

5.1: As fun as the Mz Ruby boss fight is, playing through it on the HD release can become hell. Still nothing compared to the crabs in that one mission in Raleigh's zone though.

5.2: It's pretty much a given that once villains start Looping, we may be seeing their independent adventures here and there.

5.3: I'm surprised this never came up before now.

5.4: Well, Bentley and Murray do get Green/Pink auras in the second game.

5.5: I can imagine the fun that Carmelita has on Omega.

5.6: Sadly, Penelope wasn't Awake for this.

5.7: Phoenix gets Carmelita, I imagine that Sly would have to deal with Gumshoe. Hmm, possible snippet idea there. By the way, Gumshoe is *not* a Looper, so he'd think everything was normal.

5.8: Think of the Ping as a sort of Looper Sonar, tells you generally how far away Loopers are from you, but it can't differentiate between them. So other means can be used to help with that part.

5.9: The Adventures of Conner Cooper! Now in HD! Coming when the Loops end!

5.10: I really need to see Guardians of the Galaxy…

5.11: For those that don't know the MLP Loops, Cadence loves weddings. She *really* loves weddings. As one person put it: 'Wedding-obsessed Alicorn of Love'.

5.12: Sly the Thief. I dare say he won't Class Change into Assassin, Trickster would work though.

5.13: Kellam's lack of presence catches everyone off guard. If he ever starts Looping, heaven help the Metal Gear Loop if he ends up as a villain.

5.14: Given how Awake!Trixie once tried to experiment with Chlorine Trifluoride and Dioxygen Difluoride, if she ever met the Panda King, I'd hopefully be in another Loop. Seriously, Google those chemicals and be terrified at what they can do.

5.15: It had to happen eventually. Poor Sly.

5.16: So is Carmelita now a Fire Emblem character?

5.17: Remember Loop 4.1? Here's the resolution to that!

Compilation Set 6

Right then, it's been a while since we had a Set for you guys. We've had a bit of drama going on in the thread. Long story short, Geo is no longer involved with this part of the Infinite Loops given that, among other things, he's tried to pull some spectacularly bad stunts in snippets that he submitted, including some that were in extremely bad taste. As such, I've stricken his Fiendish Shadows Loop from the previous sets since no one else was likely to pick it up. His final Loop for us is in this Set, since it was a 'one and done' sort of snippet.

I've also made it so that Guest Comments are moderated. If you tend to comment this way, it's not that we don't want anonymous comments on here, it's more that I'd prefer to have them with an attached user so that we can get back to you if needed.

Right then, on with the Set!

6.1 (Kingofsouls)

Carmelita entered the hideout, and saw an immensely annoyed Sly Cooper standing while Bentley, Murray, and Penelope were laughing quite loudly, with Murray lying on the floor for some reason.

This confused the Inspector. "Did I miss something?"

"You sure did!" Murray bellowed. Before Sly could protest, Penelope grabbed his tail, and lifted it for Carmelita to see.

Sly's tail was made of several brown metal rings with a silver ring every so often. Carmelita expression quickly lost its serious expression, and she was trying very hard not to laugh.

"Don't say it..." Sly moaned.

Carmelita' s expression turned into a very wide grin. "Okay then...Ringtail."

Bentley, Penelope, and Murray started to laugh harder.

6.2

"So this Loop's all about giant board games?" Penelope asked her host, a man in green. He'd introduced himself as Luigi.

"Pretty much." Luigi replied, "The general gist of the game is to get stars. To get a star, you need 20 coins. Getting coins can happen in a few ways, from landing on the blue spaces to winning mini-games."

"Mini-games?" Penelope asked.

"Oh, yeah. After everyone's rolled for that round and their spaces have done their thing, all four players are put into a mini-game. A couple of examples could be 'Reach the goal' or 'Last Man Standing'. Since the mini-game is chosen at random right before it begins though means that any real strategizing has to be done on the fly." Luigi explained.

"Gotcha, so I see on this list you gave me that the next board is 'Waluigi Island'." Penelope said, "Any warnings you can give me?"

"Yeah, I have one." Luigi replied; pointing at a lanky competitor dressed in purple. "Watch out for that guy."

"Why?"

"It's his home board." Luigi explained. "There's this one section on it. Barring a few set spaces, everything else is a single type of space,

and it changes each turn. One turn they could all be blue spaces, the next they could be all Chance Time, and the turn after that they could all be Game Guy."

"Still doesn't explain why he's the biggest threat." Penelope replied.

"I just don't know how he did it." Luigi said, looking down. "One time he went straight to that one area of the board and stayed there for the rest of the game. He kept declaring Anarchy, did nothing but mess with us the entire game, never bothered going for star spaces. All that and *he still won* ."

"…wow. I… I've got nothing to say there."

6.3 (Kingofsouls)

All things considered, it was a slow morning at France's Interpol office. Officers went to and fro, thankful for the miracle elixir known as coffee.

The major event of the morning seemed to be the investigation of the Fiendish Five. Or in this case, the end of it. Inspector Fox had seemingly arrested four of the Five, while Muggshot babbled about how his mysterious boss Clockwerk just exploded.

So much for studying the mysterious immortal robot bird, though to be honest, calling Clockwerk a thing was more accurate.

Then the door opened with a crash, the officers surprised by the sudden entrance.

"Good morning everyone. I am Carmelita Fox, Inspector of Interpol and the one who arrested the Five."

The Head Inspector was about to berate Fox for being so damn cheerful in the morning when a second person walked through the

door. Most of the officers present dropped what they were holding when they realised who it was, resulting in several drinks spread about the office floor, forming lakes in the landscape of carpet.

"And I'm Sly Cooper, the guy you've been trying to arrest for several years."

"I'd like to take this moment to announce that I've been a member of the Cooper Gang for years..."

"Explaining way too much with way too little..."

"..and obviously this means I'm retiring for from immediately!"

Sly and Carmelita held each other's hands, Camelita's lower leg lifted. The rest of the coffee cups dropped to the floor, creating rivers of coffee to connect to the lakes.

"Even better, Sly and I have such a deep connection, we're getting married!"

"And you're all invited! We'll give you everything you need sometime tomorrow!"

"See you soon former colleagues!"

And with that, the two kissed each other as they left, leaving all of Interpol with stunned expression, dropped jaws, and broken coffee cups.

Several minutes passed, the Head Inspector walking into his office. He went to his desk, snatched a key. The key had a small wine bottle on it.

Everyone needed it.

The wedded couple laughed loudly with abandon as they dashed to the awaiting van, the back doors open. They quickly entered, the

doors closing as they drove away.

"Bentley, please tell me you got that recorded." Sly asked his friend,. Bentley responded with a smile of his own.

"You bet Sly. This is going to be one heck of a wedding video."

6.4 (Xomniac)

Neyla only had a single instant to feel an instant of pure, abject terror before her vision was consumed by yellow light, something cold and metallic entered her spine, and everything went black.

INITIATING START-UP SEQUENCE.

ERROR. CORRUPTED.

ERROR. CLOCKWERK-BACKUP(1) CORRUPTED.

ERROR. CLOCKWERK-BACKUP(2) CORRUPTED.

ERROR. CLOCKWERK-BACKUP(3) CORRUPTED.

ERROR. CLOCKWERK-BACKUP(4) CORRUPTED.

ERROR. CLOCKWERK-BACKUP(5) CORRUPTED.

INITIATING EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS.

OPERATIONAL.

NONONONOTAGAINNOTAGAINSOCOLDSOHOTCANTFEELCANTTHINKSOMEONEHELPMEMAKEITSTOPMAKEITSTOPSORRYSOSOSOSORRYHELPHELPHELLASDAAIW7A4Q36BQ42Y!u90240N22208

ERROR. CORRUPTED.

INITIATING FINAL RETRIBUTION OVERRIDE.

SALVAGING

SALVAGING

OPERATIONAL.

"BEHOLD! CLOCK-LA IS-!"

"Don't fall behi- *hurk!"*

Sly reeled back in shock when Neyla suddenly collapsed to her knees and emptied her stomach. "C-constable!? What's wrong, are you-?"

"Cooper..." Neyla gasped, her chest heaving violently. She raised her head and stared him in the eyes. To Sly's surprise, instead of false sympathy and a deeply repressed frigidity, he saw... sympathy. Understanding. Even a bit of begrudging respect. "You were right... damn it all Cooper, you were right. Clockwerk... that bastard... he's..." The bengal tiger shuddered violently, gritting her teeth in raw rage. "That *thing* is pure evil. I got a glimpse of its mind. Just a glimpse and... I should have brained the damn bird and crashed the whole damn ship into a volcano long before now. Bloody hell, Cooper... I... I know I must sound mad to you... I know this seems insane... I don't know how long it's been happening but... I know that this doesn't make any sense, but I'm sorry, alright? Now..."

The Constable heaved herself upright, her legs shaking violently. "Come on... forget the stupid race, I'm not feeling up to it right now. I-I know a good back door into the ponce's club. You oughta be able to use-"

Her ramblings were cut off by a hand on her shoulder, forcing her to stop. She looked over her shoulder Sly, surprised at the steel in the master thief's gaze.

"Actually..." He stated. "I understand more about what you're talking about then you'd think. And while I might not actually forgive you for what you've done... well, the fact that you're willing to apologize is definitely a step in the right direction."

Neyla blinked blearily in shock. "Wait, y-you know what's been happening to me?!"

"I can guess. What I do know are Interpol stake-out maneuvers to combat exhaustion, meaning I know that you're on your last legs. Sleep. You'll be alright, I promise."

Neyla stared at him incredulously before flashing him a true and honest smile. A smile she wore as her eyes drifted shut and she slowly keeled over.

Sly hastily grabbed her as she fell, supporting her as she snored in his arms. *'Well, this is definitely new. Now, how to explain this to-!'*

"Pst! Sly!"

The raccoon's spine went ramrod straight when he heard a disturbingly familiar voice behind him.

"Ready to take down that no good rotten-!... traitor sleeping in your arms."

"Carmelita, there is a very good explanation for this!"

Sly swallowed heavily when he heard the telltale whine of a shock pistol charging.

"There had damn well better be, ringtail, or you're sleeping on the couch for the foreseeable future."

"Before you say even a single word, let me be very, very clear here! Neyla and Penelope are *nothing* alike! Whereas Penelope was a hero who went down a dark road, Neyla was and always has been a cold-hearted villain. She grew up on the streets, clawing her way to where she was via extortion, subterfuge, all forms of deception. All her life, her only concern has been number one. The only, *only* way to make her understand that that was not a correct frame of mind was to show her what all her self-serving earned her, pure and simple. Now that the lesson has been learned, the marker has been replaced and she'll be looping normally. Now, is that everything, or do you have anything else you want to shout at me about?"

The only response Themis received was silence.

"Good. And for the record? I've heard Aphrodite talking, so let me be clear: I do *not* get off on torturing villains. The plain fact of it is that the one's I have are mostly unrepentant. The only way they'll see the error of their ways is if it is shoved down their throats, liberally and repeatedly, until the message sticks. Are we clear?"

"... yeah, we're clear."

"Great! Don't let the door hit you on the way out."

Skuld started to walk towards the door before suddenly coming to a halt. "You know... you've been in here awhile."

"Yeah, well, these Loops are high maintenance, what with the time travel and all. So?"

"Well... me, Sleipnir and Hephaestus are going to grab some drinks later. Want to come with?"

"... you sure you want the 'justice freak' to come with you?"

"Yeah, I am."

"... fine."

"Great! See you there!"

"Yeah, sure, whatever..."

6.5 (Valentine Meikin)

Carmen looked confused as she awoke in what was, mostly, Baseline, both Zack and Ivy looking at her in confusion, since she was in practically civilian attire, which, to be honest, was a red leather jacket instead of her trenchcoat, and was clearly still a member of ACME.

"Zack, Ivy, Carmen, I have a mission for you... Carmelita and Sly Cooper have just stolen the Eiffel Tower in Paris..." The Chief announced. Carmen's eyebrow shot up. What were they doing in her home loop, and why was she foiling such an audacious crime by them?

As they arrived at the site of the former location of the Eiffel Tower, Carmen noticed a small blue object lodged in a wall, that looked like a stylized raccoon mask. On the back, it read simply, "Payback's a bitch, Isn't it?"

She cursed. She should have remembered. Sly Cooper's whole career revolved round stealing from Master Criminals and he was not one to back down from a challenge.

6.6 (SeaofFallingStars)

Sly had found the actors and actresses for his show to be rather interesting. Carmelita was awake (he thanked his admin for that small favor), but no one else was. In a note of humor, he saw that

Penelope, Rajan, and Ms. Decibel were all people working on the show: set designer and decorator and composer. Well, if they were happy and not criminals, who was he to complain?

"Hey Ringtail! Your outfit for the Clockwerk showdown is ready! I had to put in a lot of effort but this'll be my greasy sweetest outfit yet! Give it a shot."

Wait what? Sly turned to face…

"Dimitri?"

"Who's this Dimitri cat? Did you forget who I was lead boy? I am the great costume department chief, Pietr!"

'Pietr' leaned in to Sly's personal space, giving him an appraising look.

"Now, we have to get you ready, so will you come normally or will I have to put you into a fabulous outfit?"

Sly went calmly, but had gears turning in his head. If this show could get a second season…

"Hey Pietr!"

"What is it, main man?"

"If this show gets a second season, want to be in it? You're right: you're great with costumes. What's to say you can't be one of the criminal masterminds, running a nightclub to earn the group money while preparing the patrons to be unknowing parts of the grand plan?"

'Pietr' gave the idea thought while show Sly his outfit for the Jetpack fight.

"If you can talk the director and writers into it…"

"Shouldn't be a problem. Who knows? You might prove to be such a hit that you'll get to stick around!"

That had been a fun Loop, but the one immediately afterwards …

Sly was tailing Dimitri, while chuckling at his prank. Sure, Dimitri wouldn't realize he was the subject of a prank, but convincing someone who is a villain to play that villain in a show was pretty good. At least until Dimitri turned to face him.

"Okay smooth operator, what's going on!? Why I am reprising my role, only for it to be my life!? I need answers bro!"

Sly paused, then had Dimitri follow him back to the hideout. The others were surprise to see Dimitri with him.

"Okay, so a prank I pulled had an unintended consequence…"

6.7 (Geohikari152, reworked by me.)

Sly Awoke running into a wall. After getting rid of his dizzy spell and using a simple heal spell he checked his surroundings. He was in what seemed to be… 1925 if a lone newspaper stand was correct. Checking the title he saw the words Rapture Times. He felt his Loop Memories click and blanched. He'd heard about this loop once and really didn't want to visit it. Not if it was able to make Sakura Haruno scream in fear upon hearing the word 'Rapture'.

"Oh shoot. I'm in BioShock. I was wondering why the streets were deserted." muttered Sly as he took a look at himself. He breathed a sigh of relief to see his normal body. He checked his Memories and gained a deadpanned look.

Apparently Rapture's R&D department had been experimenting with a new tonic formula that merged humans with animal DNA. He was

apparently one of the test subjects, alongside the rest of the gang as well as his wife. They had scattered when Rapture started to fall apart at the seams and now were on the run from the city itself as it became hell on earth.

He sent out a Ping and got a response. Judging from by the amount of responses, everyone in the Looping gang, plus possibly the local Anchor. Taking out his binocucom, Sly contacted everyone. "Sly! Where are we?" asked Bentley.

"Remember when Naruto told us about BioShock?" asked Sly nervously.

"The one that scares even Sakura Haruno?" asked Penelope.

"That's where we are right now. Basically, we're at the point where Rapture went and became hell." sighed Sly.

"Shit." said everyone else.

"Yeah, I know. Meet me at the theatre; we can use that for the safe house. We're going to try and fix the place after meeting the local Anchor, followed by a run-down on the baseline. We have a lot of work to do." agreed Sly.

Extension by Xomniac

Sly tapped on Carmelita's shoulder once he got the chance. "Say, Carmelita, have you seen Neyla?"

The fox gave her husband a surprised look. "The t-I mean, constable? No, can't say I have, why?"

"She responded to the Ping, but it felt... weird. Any ideas on where she might be?"

"Eh, who knows. I'm sure she's fine though."

Booker eyed the tiger-woman who had replaced his daughter this Loop. The grin she was sporting was somewhat deranged, but considering the reason behind the smile, he couldn't help but join her. "So... I'm going to venture a guess and say that was cathartic?"

"You have no *bloody* idea." Neyla chuckled madly as she allowed her hands to smolder and burn. "Thanks for tossing me that souped-up recipe, I've wanted to do something like that to a similar wanker for a *long* time."

"Heh, I hear you. Sure, the times when Elizabeth manages to get its over-protectiveness to work for us are nice, but the rest of the time... well, yeah. Sometimes, its nice to just kick back, relax, and let the Songbird burn."

"Damn straight! Now, pass me a pint, would you? I intend to get well and proper shitfaced!"

6.8 (TrueZero, Xomniac, SeaOfFallingStars, Leonite, Thanatos's Scribe)

(TrueZero)

"Alright then, is everyone here?" Sly said, a coffee mug in hand. After all six of the native Loopers confirmed that they were present, he continued. "I took part of one of these in another Loop, and it was good for seeing how some of the others fared in the Loops, so I wanted to see how well it went here."

"Come on then Cooper, out with it." Neyla replied, sipping her beer.

"It's a drinking game. We each give one example for a topic and the other players decide who wins in the end." Sly said, "So here goes. I'm guessing that everyone's been to Eiken?"

The groans from Carmelita, Neyla and Penelope confirmed that they had been there before. Murray and Bentley slumped in their chairs, while Dimitri leant back and sighed.

"Not a good Loop for you guys either?" Neyla asked.

"Trust me Neyla, it never is." Penelope replied. "It's something that happens to all of us, sooner or later."

"Well that answers that question. OK guys, how'd you wind up with your first times in Eiken?" Sly replied.

(Xomniac)

"All I did was diss some cracker-box robo-computer that asked me to play an utterly jacked-up game of tic-tac-toe!" Dimitri huffed angrily. "Next thing I know, the thing is spouting some crack-pot lingo about 'launches' and then everything goes inky-black."

Neyla grimaced as she swished the contents of her mug around. "Yeah, something a bit similar happened to me. Basically, right? I was in the Terminator universe while Skynet was human. I... might have overreacted just a tad when it told me about its normal form."

"Overreacted?" Penelope raised an eyebrow questioningly.

"You get buggered a hundred times over by that bloody bastard of an owl and tell me that introducing a few million volts to cyborgs doesn't sound like a necessary reflex!"

(TrueZero)

"It was a Minecraft Loop. The group was me and Steve, as well as Ratchet and Clank coming in from their Loop." Bentley groaned, taking a big swig of his drink.

"How was that bad?" Sly asked.

"It was a Variant. A lot of technical stuff was new to the Loop, mainly explosives that really ramped up quickly. Steve hadn't experienced this kind of variant before, so the four of us got to experimenting. We'd just tried out an Antimatter Explosive and seen the resulting crater, when Ratchet somehow manages to create a Red Matter Explosive. We set it off in the middle of the crater." Bentley explained.

"Doesn't sound too bad." Carmelita replied.

"It was a bomb, the size of your chair, that created a black hole that devoured the world." Bentley groaned, looking at Carmelita, who had gone a little pale and was looking at her chair. "We never even stood a chance."

(Leonite)

"I think I can top that." Murray spoke up. "Was one of those... uh... Evan Jelly On loops."

That took a couple of seconds to process. "Don't you mean Evangelion?" Sly pointed out.

"No, in this case it was Jelly. I was just there as a regular guy, and then I see this giant purple giant of jelly glowing green and red!" Murray explained. "I didn't even get to meet the Anchor there before I ended up in Eiken."

"Wait... how did you end up in Eiken?" Neyla asked.

Penelope actually nodded in agreement to that. "From the sounds of it the Anchor, Shinji, was mixing AT Fields with Spiral power... but that alone shouldn't have done it, he can usually keep it stable from what I've been told." She said. All eyes slowly looked towards Murray, who rubbed the back of his neck with a nervous chuckle.

"I... might have taken a bite out of it. It was a giant made of jelly! Who knows how long it'll be 'till my next chance?" He asked as the

group chuckled.

(Thanatos's Scribe)

"Before I begin, I've got something you guys: How many of you know of the Bionicle universe?" Penelope asked, with both Murray and Dimitri raising their hands in reply while the other four looked on in confusion.

"Looped in as a replacement for Toa Kongu during the Mahri times down in the deep. It was rather groovin', minus the whole Barraki jig." Dimitri explained, and Murray nodded.

"Hey, that's pretty cool. I had ended up looping in as Nuju's replacement, which was really sweet. Besides, check this out!" Murray said and tapped his hand on his drink, causing for the liquid to freeze over.

"Didn't Nuju end up becoming a Turaga?" Penelope pointed out, making Murray slump at her question.

"I don't want to talk about it." Murray grumbled as he tried to take a sip of his drink, only for the frozen beverage to slip out and bounce off of his nose onto the table.

"Would someone mind explaining to the rest of us?" Carmelita irritably asked, and the trio turned to face the others.

"To sum it up, there's six main 'tribes', all inorganic, that live on an island named after their 'Great Spirit', Mata Nui, and every once in a while a villager from each tribe is transformed into a 'Toa' to stop a threat threatening the world." Dimitri said, and the others nodded in acceptance at this answer.

"And what does this have to do with you winding up in Eiken?" Neyla asked, and Penelope became sullen as she remembered what had happened.

"It all started when I had Looped in as a replacement for Nuparu, who apparently was the 'inventor' of the Onu-Matoran. It was same as baseline until after the whole Bohrok incident, when I was able to procure an Exo-Toa from the Toa Nuva's fight with the Bohrok's leaders, the Bahrag. I tried multiple times to make one able to use elemental attacks, from installing elemental disks to flat-out integrating Rahkshi and Bohrok-Kal parts into the armor. But when I tried to mix energized protodermis and antidermis, I could barely make out a bright flash just before I appeared in front of Eiken."

"I don't see how that could be too bad." Sly commented.

"Think of what would happen if you mixed anti-matter and plasma, and you got a severely weakened version of the results." Penelope stated, and everyone else paled as they realized the consequences.

"Oh." Sly said as he slumped in his seat.

"Yes, oh.

(TrueZero)

"Well, black holes, killing an Anchor, turning yourself into a missile target, turning yourself into goop, and a Matter-Antimatter explosion. Yeah… I don't think I can top those." Sly said, having heard all that.

"Well come on Ringtail, we've still got yours and Carmelita's stories to go." Neyla replied. "First trip to Eiken. How'd it happen?"

"Well, I'm warning you guys, this might not be as flashy." Sly said, "I wound up in the Lyoko Loop. I had taken the role of that Loop's Anchor. The general gist with this Loop was that there's a 'real world' and a virtual one, Lyoko, which is split into five areas each with a number of these big towers set up across them. The big villain was a megalomaniacal AI that was able to use the towers to create these weird mist ghost things to futz with something in the real world, or to possess a mass of animals or something like that. By entering Lyoko and escorting me to whichever tower that XANA had activated, I was

able to shut it down and stop XANA's plans for that attempt. For a while I was stuck on Lyoko. This girl, Jenny, who was part of the team agreed to try and de-virtualise me, so I could join them in the real world, thus we could shut down the supercomputer that contained Lyoko."

"I hear ya, so, did it work?" Bentley asked.

"Yes, and no." Sly replied. "We managed to bring me into the real world, but something must have piggybacked on my code. When we went to shut down the supercomputer, the team gave me the honour of throwing the switch. I pulled it down and the next thing I knew I was in Eiken."

"That's it?" Penelope asked. "You're right, that wasn't all that flashy."

"Guess that just leaves Carmelita then." Neyla said, "So how'd you end up there?"

(SeaOfFallingStars)

"Transformers for me. I was on the crew of the Lost Light-this IDW Loop didn't have the gender thing but Arcee was still her psychotic self-and we were on Luna 2. When Tyrest flipped the switch, I had fired a shot off at him. Blew his head right off, but his legislators killed us all. One moment my head's being crushed; next thing I know my chest can be used for pontoons and my spine's in agony."

The rest of the gang winced at both her experience and the failure to stop the Killswitch. They picked up the issues when the could: Penelope loved the designs and contraptions, Murray and Sly loved the characters, while Bentley and Carmelita just enjoyed something that kept them busy when things were rough.

6.9 (SeaOfFallingStars)

"You will write 'I will not steal from pureblood families one thousand times, Mr. Cooper. Your continued crusade against such honorable families is unbecoming of anyone."

Sly held his last smirk. He was a shadow clone while the real Sylvester Cooper stole anything and everything of value in Umbridge's office. She didn't know that in addition to stealing valuables, he also fed Carmelita and the Aurors all dark objects inside said households.

He only stole from other criminals, after all. Having Carmelita hang them out to dry was simply tradition now. And Umbridge was on that list.

"Mr. Cooper, start writing."

Sly had left the room already and signal Carmelita for stage two. Blood Quills were illegal outside special contracts, of which detention lines did not fall under. The clone dispelled alongside the genjutsu hiding Sly's efforts, leaving just a calling card on Umbridge's desk and a note.

Which simply said this:

Start running, as the long arm of the law has you in her sights.

I think that'll be good enough for a closer.

6.1: Ah, the wonders of puns.

6.2: Brainscratch Commentaries, Mario Party 3, Waluigi Island. ANARCHY!

6.3: Must've been one fun wedding.

6.4: Here's a dose of Xomniac Nightmare Fuel for ya.

6.5: Challenge Accepted. Now if only there was a thread for Carmen Sandiego...

6.6: Pranks can have unexpected consequences...

6.7: Geo's one standalone Loop. Only kept due to Xomniac extending it.

6.8: Inspired by the MLP Drinking Games. Who do you think won this round?

6.9: Because crime never pays, unless you're a Looper.

Of Mice and Mechs, Crimson Edition

Right, so I should probably explain myself here.

Over on the MLP Loops, there are a handful of chapters devoted to special occasions or long-running Loops. These were the Halloween Loop, the Wedding Loop, the Season 4 Finale and the Mega Pony Loop. That last one was a Fused Loop between Mega Man and MLP, which clocked in at over 50,000 words (The average compilation for them clocks in at between 5,000 and 10,000 words). It was also written primarily by Crisis, the one running the Mega Man Loops.

This is something in the same vein as Mega Pony, in that I wrote the entirety of this one. It's a bit longer than our normal compilations, but unlike the Mega Pony one, this is only a little over the 8,000 word mark.

That being said, enjoy.

You know, Awakening in what looked like a tech bay was definitely a plus. I quickly checked to see what my body looked like in this Loop, since I didn't really think I was in my home Loop this time. No mirror nearby so no getting a look at my face, but it did feel human, so nothing too far from standard Fused Loop forms at least. Looking at the rest of me, it was definitely a human body that I'd ended up with. Oh good, my hair's still blonde. From the look of my clothes as well as the tool belt I was wearing, this tech bay belonged to me.

"Ooh, looks like this might be a pretty tech-heavy Loop that I'll be working with. Right, first things first. Loop Memories, let's see what we're dealing with."

The memories were a little bleak to be fair. From what I could tell, there were two types of sentient life on the planet, humans and

Beastmen. Humans had been forced to live underground in small, isolated villages, while the Beastmen roamed the surface, killing any humans to find their way up there.

At least, they'd try to. From the look of things, I was part of a village that had gone up to the surface. There we'd banded together to drive off any…

"There are giant robots here." I said to myself, dropping the memory check immediately. After checking my Subspace Pocket, I came to a conclusion. "Crap, I'll need to either make some room or get more space. I *will* be leaving this Loop with a robot in tow."

Deciding that the latter would be easier for now, I grabbed a handful of bolts and started to run through those exercises that Bentley had shown me a long time ago. Once I met up with the Anchor, odds were that I'd be able to get a better estimate on how long I had to build it up. Hopefully it'll be big enough to fit a robot in come the end of the Loop.

It sucked to lose a team member like that. The Anchor, Simon, and I seemed to the only ones Awake for this Loop, so when Kamina was killed in battle, I needed some time on my own. There was just… something about him that made me feel like he'd be a great fit for the Cooper Gang.

"Hey, are you OK Penelope?" Simon asked, knocking on the door.

' *It's not like there's anyone else I can talk to so openly right now.'* I thought, deciding to let him in.

"Hey, you're upset about Kamina, right?" Simon asked, sitting down beside her. All I could really respond with was a silent nod.

"You know how I took it the first time I went through it?" Simon said, "I fought. I hated myself for what had happened when I could have

saved him, but I fought anyway. Took a little while, probably about a week, but eventually Lagann couldn't take it anymore and kicked me out of the cockpit. Let's just say that Spiral Energy and Self-Loathing don't mix."

"…So what happens now?" I asked.

"Well it's been about a week, so the next major event is finding Nia. I'll be heading out soon to pick her up." Simon replied. "Trust me, you'll like her. Oh, and before I forget, I'm having Gurren set up for you to pilot it."

Wait, what?

"Me? Really?"

"I may as well give you a front row seat to some of the bigger insanity we usually come across." Simon replied with a shrug. "Besides, Rossiu tends to become a bit of a jackass once things pick up after we beat Lordgenome, so I figure he can sit this one out. See how that changes things."

"…It can get crazier?" I asked, surprised. "Because frankly, riding in a giant mech that has a battleship for a crotch is already pretty weird."

"I know, but it's still home for the next couple of months. It can and will go nth degree crazy by the end of the Loop, it always does." Simon said, getting up and walking up to the window. "For example, you see the moon?"

Following him, I looked out the window and into the sky.

"Yeah, I see it. Why?"

"Well, seven years from now we'll be riding it through space. Then we turn it into another upgrade to Gurren Lagann."

What.

"…I'm sorry… what?"

Seven years later…

"It's hard to believe that it's been seven years of peace since we fought Lordgenome." I said as I looked out over the crowd in front of me. "But it's not me who'll be making the announcement. Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you Supreme Commander Simon, of the Kamina City Government!"

I moved off to the side as Simon took his place at the podium.

"Thank you Penelope. Citizens of New Kamina City and citizens of Earth. In just seven short years, we will have reached one of the greatest Milestones in our history. From humble beginnings, we fought for the right to live on the surface, we defeated the Spiral King, we built this city, and most importantly, we brokered peace between Humanity and Beastman." Simon said, brimming with confidence. "Today is a momentous occasion. Today, we add one more accomplishment to that growing list. As we speak, brave men and women are taking those first steps towards a new era in our history. They will soon board the first Lunar Exploration Daigun, headed towards the Moon for a six month research mission. Join me as we wish for them to have a safe journey, and that when they arrive home in a little over six months, that they are happy and healthy."

At that point, Simon raised his hand into the air, pointing to the sky. The rest of us that were on stage joined in, and the crowd soon followed.

"To the Pioneers of the new era!"

"I have to say Simon, from the ruins of one gigantic Gunmen to a bustling city to manned spaceflight in seven years. That is some

insane progress." I said, as those of us in the ruling council raised toasted the flight. "To the new era!"

Everyone raised their glasses. Well, everyone except for Rossiu.

"Something the matter Rossiu?" Simon asked.

"Come on man, today's a day to celebrate!" Kittan added, lowering his glass and taking a swig.

"I know, I know. I'm happy for what we've managed to do…" Rossiu replied, his voice shaking a little.

"I sense a 'but' coming up." I said, as I started to sip my drink.

"It's Lordgenome's warning. 'When the land overflows with a million apes, the moon shall become Hell's messenger and completely destroy the world of the spiral.'" He replied.

"Oh yeah. That." I replied, "What're the current population levels?"

"Well, including the people still in the villages, and upcoming births according to hospital records, we'll pass the one million mark before the end of the week." Rossiu replied.

"I see. Well, just to be safe then, keep a close watch on the Lunar mission. If anything happens, let me know immediately, Rossiu." Simon replied. "Personally, I don't think anything'll come of it, but it never hurts to have some preparations ready. We'll keep Gimmy and Darry on standby with a number of Grapearl Squadrons too, just in case something kicks off."

"Alright Simon." Rossiu said, "I'd best check in with the mission then. Enjoy the festivities everyone." He added as he turned and left the room, leaving the glass on the table, still full.

After the celebration ended, Simon and I had a chance to talk in private.

"So, that prophecy of Lordgenome's. It's true, isn't it?" I asked, getting straight to the point.

"Yep. If everything goes the same way it normally does, we'll be looking at about three days before everything goes to Hell. Since I'm giving you the baseline experience, I won't be using any cheats in the major events. Sticking solely to abilities I'd have in the baseline." Simon replied. "Is the Gurren ready to go?"

"Well, I left Gurren with Makken and Leite, and Lagann is normally your means of getting around the city nowadays, so if you need to combine the two, head to Leite's place." I replied.

"Alright then. Everything's set up for a near-Baseline run of these events." Simon said.

"Wait, is the fact you're running this Loop as close as possible to the baseline the reason Kamina died?" I asked, concerned. "Because that seems a little bit Sakura-y to me."

"Actually," Simon replied, "Even when he's Awake, Kamina has his fair share of deaths, as do most Loopers. It's just that, when he's not Awake, he tends to push himself further after suffering a fatal injury, so a lot of the time we simply can't operate on him in time to save him. I'll tell you this though. When he survives to the end of the Loop, that's quite the experience right there."

"I'll keep that in mind." I replied.

"Anyway, that matter aside; are you enjoying the Loop thus far?"

"Piloting a mech is something my UnAwake self normally does during her ultimate downfall, but when it comes to the Looping me, it's been far too long since I was in a cockpit, especially considering my Loop normally fits right into the gap between Lordgenome's

defeat and today with room to spare. Thanks for the Spiral Cannon and the spare Core Drill by the way. I've miniaturised the former and built it into my Gunmen."

"You have a Gunmen of your own now?" Simon asked, intrigued.

"I've been building one in my spare time." I replied, pulling up the images on Simon's computer.

"Let's see then." Simon said, looking at the screen.

"Well to start off, it's based on Lordgenome's old Lazengann unit, with a few design changes. For one, all of the previous drill holes were sealed, and I've added a handful of new ones, mainly on the arms, and along the tail, although there are a few in each knee and one in each foot so they can use drills for increasing damage from kicks." I said, walking him through the machine's design. "I've built the miniature Spiral Cannon into the palm of the right hand. Thanks to that, the Knight Baron has a decent long range attack to surprise an opponent with."

"Knight Baron?"

"That's its name. It combines my two main aliases from back home: the Black Baron, and the Black Knight, the latter of which I hope to never be Awake for ever again. I went for a wolf-man motif on the upper face, while I've covered the lower face's eyes with a visor of sorts. Put it together with some of the new armour and the unit's torso looks like it's wearing a knight's helmet. Now, even though I hate my stint as the Black Knight since that's when I lost everything, I had managed to build a pretty darn big mech using period materials. That's no small feat."

"True, that is impressive."

"Now if only I could get the Knight Baron to fit into my Subspace Pocket."

"Still not big enough?" Simon asked.

"It's bigger than when I started, don't get me wrong, but I'm going to have to bust out some tech from the Transformers Branch to give me a boost." I replied.

I explained the mechanics of the subspace generator to him, making a point of stating that in a way I'd be getting the Pocket space in advance, then growing into it properly so that I wouldn't have to use the generator forever. As I'd expected, he'd been able to follow along.

"Well at least you have options there." Simon said, checking his watch, "Anyway, it's been nice chatting with you Penelope, but I'm supposed to be meeting up with Nia in about 20 minutes, so I'd best be going."

"Tonight's the big night, hmm?" I asked with a grin. "I'll not hold you up any longer. Best of Luck Simon."

"Thanks. See you later Penelope."

"See you later Simon." I replied, as we both left the room.

Three days later and the world went to hell, just as Simon had predicted. He took out the Gurren Lagann on his own to fight these weird Anti-Spiral mechs, which Gimmy had nicknamed Mugann.

Thanks to Simon's 'Baseline experience', he wound up destroying a number of buildings in the city just by beating one Mugann. Boy those things were unstable.

Following that, one thing led to another and Simon had been arrested and put on trial, and subsequently sentenced to death. Frankly the trial was a sham, as far as the majority of the team was concerned. Rossiu had lost it in the face of the Anti-Spiral attack and taken over the government. Hell, the way the trial was arranged was

rigged against Simon. Rossiu had assigned Balinbow to be Simon's attorney, while the prosecutor for the case was one of Rossiu's top subordinates.

Thankfully, circumstances defied Rossiu's plans when there was a large scale Mugann attack near Littner.

"Rossiu, you've got to let me go! I'm the only one that can fight them right now!" Simon shouted.

"How can we be certain that you won't go rogue and flee while you have the chance?" Rossiu asked.

"You can set up some kind of insurance to keep me from running away!" Simon said, before turning to look at me. I nodded solemnly, realising what he intended to do. When he turned back to Rossiu, he sighed. "You can put a bomb in Gurren. If I try to run, then you can set it off. It'll take the Gurren Lagann out with me inside it, and I'll be killed in the blast."

"…Very well. We can arrange that." Rossiu replied, "You have one hour to get ready for launch. We'll set up Gurren's bombs in that time. You will be given your Core Drill immediately prior to launch, and you will return it to me upon disembarking when you return."

"Fine. So long as the Mugann are stopped before they reach Kamina City, I'll accept those terms." Simon replied.

Why did Rossiu being reasonable make me nervous?

Well, first things first. Thank you Simon for the Spiral Cannon. Rigging up a set of weapons to allow the Grapearls to fight the Mugann went much easier than I'd originally thought, so that was a plus. Now if only Gurren Lagann hadn't been totalled beforehand, things would have gone easier.

Of course, that positive is nothing compared to the stunt that Rossiu and his cronies pulled on Simon just prior to take-off. Kinon volunteered to sit in the Gurren cockpit, my cockpit, while Simon was fighting the Mugann. They knew he didn't like risking the death of his friends, so Kinon sitting in Gurren was the perfect plan to ensure that Simon came back.

So with Simon off to battle, I had to make sure that Gimmy and Darry's squads were outfitted with the new Anti-Spiral Countermeasures. Thankfully that was easy enough, although Rossiu's cronies triple checking my work wasn't helping. Since I was the go-to pilot for Gurren, Rossiu had me under armed surveillance to make sure I was 'playing nice'.

Seriously Yggdrasil, am I going to be a criminal wherever I go?

Turns out as soon as the countermeasures were completed, me and Simon weren't needed anymore. We were each thrown in prison and left in there to rot.

I don't know how Simon fared during this time, but it was times like this I wish I had an RC Car, or just something to tinker with to keep my hands busy. I couldn't really use my Pocket because I was still being watched night and day by a guard. I must be a special case, lucky me.

I must have been stuck in that prison for a little over a week, with everyone in there against me, so you can imagine my surprise when a Grapearl breaks through the wall to my cell.

I was even more surprised to see Kiyal in the cockpit.

"Hey Penelope! You up for a jailbreak?" She asked, grinning like a madwoman. I quickly ran towards her, the cockpit closing around us.

"I think my guard there would like it if I stayed, but screw her. Thanks Kiyal." I replied as Kiyal relinquished the pilot's seat to me. "So

what's going on? Didn't get any news in there."

"Ok, first off, Rossiu's got this big big Dai-Gun, he's got all of Kamina City in there, except for a lot of members from Team Dai-Gurren." Kiyal explained, "Yoko's just busted Simon out, and he took Viral with them-"

"Wait, Viral? Recurring pain in the ass, that Viral?" I asked, surprised.

"Yeah, no idea why. Yoko said to meet at Makken and Leite's place when I busted you out." Kiyal replied, "She says that it had to be me that came to get you because the rest of the team's getting an upgrade and they need to be there to help out."

"Well that explains things. To be honest, I expected Kittan to be part of the Jailbreak team." I replied. "I mean, the last time you piloted a Gunmen was seven years ago, wasn't it?"

"Actually, I've been helping Leite with unit testing." Kiyal replied. "It was good practice, now let's pick up the pace!"

"Roger!" I said with a grin, as we flew towards Makken and Leite's workshop.

When we arrived at the workshop, we were greeted by the bulk of Team Dai-Gurren's pilots. Dayakka, Aretenborough, and the other members of the Dai-Gurren bridge crew were on board Rossiu's Dai-Gun, the Arc-Gurren. Gimmy and Darry were likely on standby in their Grapearls, so it was mainly those of us that piloted Gunmen during the Teppelin War.

"Good to see the two of you back with the team!" Kittan said, tossing the Core Drill to Simon.

"It's a good thing that Kittan was on hand after the Gurren Lagann's last battle." Leite said with a smirk. "He got it sent here and told us to

make it better than new."

She pressed a button, and to be honest, the Gurren Lagann looked better than before.

"Woop de doo. You apes have your symbol back."

I turned around to see Viral leaning against the doorframe. Kittan and the others recoiled.

"What's this guy doing here?" Kittan asked Simon.

"I decided to bring him with us." Simon said, "Penelope, your Gunmen's able to fight, isn't it?"

At that point, all eyes were on me. Thanks Simon.

"Thanks buddy, way to put me on the spot." I said, "But yeah, it's ready to go. I left it here for safekeeping."

"And it's right over there." Leite said, pointing at a covered Gunmen. "She's a real beaut, I tell ya."

"Well, since your Gunmen's ready to go, I was thinking of having Viral pilot the Gurren." Simon said.

"Say what now?" I replied, shocked.

"What the hell are ya saying Simon?!" Kittan shouted. "He fought for the Spiral King and tried to kill us! Multiple times!"

"As much as it pains me, I agree with the loudmouth." Viral agreed, while Kiyal, Jorgen and Balinbow tried to hold Kittan back. "I was your enemy, and yet you'd trust me with one of your best Gunmen? Don't tell me prison made you go soft in the head, Simon."

"On the contrary. We can't afford to go without you now. This isn't about humanity and beastmen anymore, it's about survival. This time, both races are on the same side, so I say we capitalise on that.

You're a damn good pilot Viral, and frankly, it's a waste to not have you piloting something at a time like this. Besides, you were told to see humanity's fate for yourself, right? Well in the Gurren you'll have a front row seat."

"I hate to admit it," I added, "but Simon's right. I'll use my Gunmen, Viral can take the Gurren."

I walked over to the covered up Gunmen and pulled the sheet off, revealing the Knight Baron for all to see.

"Y-You built that?!" Kittan sputtered.

"Is that the Spiral King's Gunmen?" Viral asked, stunned.

"No, but it was based on the general body type. It'll take me a minute or two to run through my checks, so I'll be over here." I replied, reaching under the seat and pulling my Core Drill out of my Pocket. "Under the seat, right where I left it."

"It's got a Core Drill too?" Yoko asked.

"So Viral, what do you say?" Simon asked.

"Pilot the Gunmen that shamed me all those years ago?" Viral asked, "As crazy as it sounds, my body knows what it wants. You're on."

"Well you'd best be quick getting used to it." Simon asked, "this one packs a punch."

"You'd both best be careful." Leite said, interrupting the two. "We gave it a tune up while it was being repaired, so it's stronger than before too."

"Alright you guys, buckle the hell up!" Kittan shouted, "See that Moon up there? We're gonna go and stop that thing from crashin' into Earth! If that means we have to smash it to bits, then that's what we'll do! Ya hear me?!"

With a massive cheer from the team (myself included), everyone ran towards their respective Gunmen.

Once everyone was ready we all took off. The Gurren Lagann and Knight Baron had the ability to reach the Arc-Gurren relatively unassisted, while everyone else was attached to a Rocket-Gunmen and was rising right alongside us.

We arrived just in the nick of time too. From the sound of things, the situation wasn't good.

"No giving up yet, Rossiu!" Simon roared, blasting a ridiculously massive Mugann away from the already massive Arc-Gurren. If you wanted an idea on the size, Arc-Gurren was about the size of Teppelin, which was the centrepiece of Kamina City and the Spiral King's domain. This one Mugann make it look small by comparison.

So of course, Simon was able to blast it away. This Loop ran on the Rule of Cool.

"The cavalry's here!" I added, taking out a few of the smaller Mugann. Since the Knight Baron was based off of the Lazengann, I'd designed it to use the thinner drills that were more like whips.

"So keep on fightin'!" Kittan shouted, blasting some more, "As much as you quite frankly piss me off, you've got most of my family on board, so right now I'll fight alongside ya."

"The instant you give up, it's over." Simon said, "Remember? This drill is the drill that'll pierce the heavens! Viral!"

"Could be interesting." Viral chuckled, "Why not?"

"We embark on the winding Spiral Path, where the paths of man and beast intersect!" Simon shouted.

"Join with yesterday's foes to smash fate! We grab tomorrow's path with our own hands!" Viral added, as both then spoke together.

"Destiny combining! Gurren Lagann!"

"Let's do it guys!" I said, as we all joined in for the last line.

"JUST WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK WE ARE?"

Well… that happened.

You remember when Simon told me that after a point the group would be riding through space on a ship made out of the moon?

Yeah… he was serious.

To sum up what had happened in the battle, Simon and Viral merged the Gurren Lagann with the Arc-Gurren. The newly formed Arc-Gurren Lagann then proceeded to punch giant Megan into *another plane of existence* before eventually turning their attention to the falling moon, which turned out to be a disguise for Lordgenome's old flagship, the Cathedral Terra. Leaving it for me to pilot this new Gurren Lagann form (which, for the record, meant that I was piloting a Gunmen, that was in turn piloting a bigger Gunmen), he entered the moon. Less than five minutes later, the moon not only stopped falling and had cracked open to fully reveal the massive battleship inside. To give an idea of the size, it was still acting as the Moon while we were orbiting Earth.

But ultimately, we'd stopped the Human Annihilation System and saved the world, again. Now it was about a week or two later, we would soon be setting off to take the fight to the Anti-Spirals…

"Penelope, Leite, how do you like the Super Galaxy Dai-Gurren's facilities?" Simon asked over the intercom.

"To be honest Simon, this place is an engineer's dream!" I happily replied, "So much stuff to play with, this is incredible!"

"C'mon Penny, we're supposed to be getting Space Gunmen ready for everyone else, you included." Leite said, "Focus a little, will ya?"

"Sorry Leite, it's just a little overwhelming, that's all. I was used to a tech bay or a workshop, but this? This place is huge!"

"Well it's gotta be. We're building Space Gunmen, and those have to be cascade piloted." Leite replied with a grin. "Now let's get crackin'! We've got shit to build!"

"On my way!" I replied.

Later on, I was sat in my quarters, looking out the window.

"If Bentley could see me now. Gotta hand it to ya Yggdrasil, you've got some insane worlds out there, but I'd be lying if I said this hasn't been fun."

At that, the doorbell rang.

"It's open!" I called, as Simon walked in.

"Hey Penelope."

"Oh, hey Simon." I replied. "You were right. We're going to be flying through space, using what we knew as the moon for a ship. That's definitely something that'll make the guys back home jealous."

"Nothing like this back in your Loop?"

"Well, we do get to travel in time, but if it's a standard Loop, we never leave Earth." I said, "So, how long have we got left in the Loop?"

"If everything works out right, probably another month or so. We're in the home stretch now. By the way, after this next encounter with the Anti-Spirals, that's your best time to pocket your Gunmen." Simon said.

"Really? Seems a little soon, doesn't it?"

"Well, after this next battle, things reach the point where we're all essentially going to be piloting one gigantic Gunmen."

"We're really turning the ship into a Gunmen?" I asked.

"Yep."

"…The Laws of Physics must hate this Loop."

"Trust me. Just be thankful this doesn't appear to be a Movie Variant." Simon said, "Then our final Gurren Lagann form literally contains galaxies. Besides, it's not that the Laws of Physics hate us, but I bet that our Admin, whoever they are, must have a field day with us at the end of that particular type of Variant."

"I'm… not too fond of the Admin for my Loop, to be perfectly honest." I replied, lowering my voice a little.

Simon looked at me, puzzled.

"Bad experience during my initial Loops. Back home, I'm part of a group called the Cooper Gang. Our leader is the latest in a long line of master thieves known as the Cooper Clan." I said, thinking about it, I'd never really told Simon about myself before the Loops. Well, that was about to change. "In my baseline, I was convinced that the gang's leader was squandering both my potential and that of my friend. We were both the resident tech specialists, and we built a lot of stuff together, but we would never be seen as anything more than criminals, given our primary line of work, as well as lackeys, given the fact that we technically answered to someone else.

In the end, I betrayed them. I stole the plans for the time machine and sold them to an enemy of the Cooper Clan who had me build a second time machine. With the time machine ready to go, he recruited various criminals from across the world and left each of us in a different timeframe to deal with a different Cooper. There were six of us in this new group, which was named after the one running it all. We were the LeParadox Gang."

"LeParadox huh? Definitely sounds like a Time Travel villain." Simon replied. "So what happened then?"

"Once we were dropped off for our own respective jobs, we were allowed to do what we wanted, provided we dealt with that time's Cooper and took their weapon for LeParadox's collection. To fix the damage we caused, the Cooper Gang went back in time themselves, defeating each of us one by one. I first Awoke as a Looper about ten minutes before my final defeat. Too late to stop myself from betraying the Cooper Gang, too late to stop LeParadox's scheme before it started, too late to change sides at the eleventh hour. Then it happened again, and again, and again. Always just before my defeat, never enough time to change things. I went through that point in time over three hundred thousand times. It was only when I was well and truly broken that I Awakened in present day Holland."

"Penelope…" Simon replied.

"It's alright Simon." I sighed. "I'm Looping normally now, so everything's OK now. A number of scars, sure. But I'm working through them a little bit at a time."

"Well you've got friends in two Loops to call upon now." Simon said, placing his hand on my shoulder. "I'd best get going, we'll be good to go in a few days but after that, we'll be right back into the war. Make sure you're rested, OK? Leeron's normally on the bridge during combat situations, but you'll be right in the firing line with the rest of us."

"I'll give it my all. Count on it." I replied, "Oh, and before you go? Thanks for listening."

"Anytime. I'll see you later. Oh, and the signal to pocket your Gunmen is an ocean. When you see an ocean after we set off, that's your chance." He said, leaving the room and closing the door behind him. To be honest, I felt a bit better after explaining that to him.

Now though, I had to get my head in the game for all-out war.

A few days later, and we were about to set out for the Anti-Spiral Home world. Using Nia's engagement ring as a marker, all Simon had to do was picture it and the Super Galaxy Dai-Gurren's systems would take care of the rest.

"You know Darry; I don't really get this 'Perceptual Teleportation' thing." Gimmy said as he waited in his Grapearl's cockpit.

"I'm not too sure about how it works either Gimmy, but from what I could gather it works by transcending time and space using Nia and Simon's connection with one another as a guide." Darry replied. I was listening to them chat so I decided to fill them in.

"It's kind of like that. I'll run you through how it works." I said, "Think of the universe as a big 3D map. Simon's going to picture Nia's engagement ring and will the S.G. Dai-Gurren to head towards it. Since he'll be focusing on Nia's ring in particular, the ship will search for that one specifically. In essence, Simon's working to give us a distance for the journey and the right direction for us to travel in. From there, the S.G. Dai-Gurren's systems will kick in and teleport us towards it. Without the teleport, we could be travelling for years. With it though the journey should take a few minutes to complete."

"That's why we're in our Cockpits then?" Darry asked, "But why are you up there if you'll be fighting in your Gunmen?"

"To answer the first question, yeah, we'll likely be fighting Anti-Spirals pretty soon after we arrive. As for your second one, I'm going to be headed down to you guys in a few minutes, just making some calibrations and then I'll be getting ready for battle myself."

"Well we'll see you when you get here, but can you hurry it up a little?" Gimmy asked, "It's boring as hell waiting like this."

"I can only go as fast as the systems can, it's taking a little time to get a coordinate lock." I replied.

A few minutes later, we were ready to go. I set the system to run from voice commands and headed down to the Launch Bay.

' *We're coming Nia.'* I thought. That was probably something going through everyone's minds at the moment.

"Space Knight Baron ready to go! Whenever you're ready Simon!"

"Thanks Penelope." Simon replied before opening a comm channel. "Everyone, we're about to make the jump into Anti Spiral Space. The Anti-Spiral has taken one of our friends, and I trust that you'll agree when I say that we'll go through hell to get her back if we have to. This isn't going to be easy though. If you all remember the last battle at Teppelin, then remember this: Lordgenome was crushed by the Anti-Spiral. It's up to us to surpass him and to show them just what we Earthlings are truly capable of! So what're we waiting for? Let's go rescue our comrade!"

It's possible that the resulting cheer could be heard across the entire ship.

"Super Galaxy Dai-Gurren, beginning Perceptual Teleportation!" Simon declared, as the engines roared into life.

Then everything went white for a moment, and when we could see again, the area we'd ended up in could really only be described as beautiful.

Then I saw the giant naked Nia being slowly disintegrated.

"Oh… Oh my. Simon, care to try again?" I asked.

"Probably no point to it." Simon replied over the Comm. "According to Lordgenome; that Nia is messing with the Perceptual Teleportation. We try jumping again; we're just as likely to end up right back here."

"So what're we waiting for?" Kittan shouted. "Let's do something to help us get moving!"

[Foolish people of the Spiral.]

"What the hell?" Viral asked, as everyone tried to find the one who was speaking.

"Who's there?" Simon asked.

"Anti-Spiral." Lordgenome explained.

"Where is the voice coming from?" I asked. It was one of the newer members, Cybela, who answered.

"It seems to be coming from every direction."

"How can they do that?" I asked.

"It is a small feat for them." Lordgenome replied. "Our universe is ever expanding and remains infinitely malleable. The Anti-Spiral are in full control of the entire process."

"But that means-"

"Yes. It would not be inaccurate to say the the entire universe is our enemy." He finished.

There was a tense silence in response to that statement.

"We're up against the entire universe?" I asked, suddenly feeling extremely small.

[Exactly. You cling to the faintest slivers of hope, climbing up time and again from the precipice of despair. That is true foolishness, and it is time for that cycle to come to an end.]

Watching from my screen in the Knight Baron, I then saw two rifts open up in front of the ship.

[Your last flicker of hope will die when this girl vanishes.]

Of course. If this is an image of the real Nia, then Nia must be breaking apart in the same way. If she breaks down completely and vanishes once and for all, then we'd have no way to find where the Anti-Spiral was hiding.

Having realised that, I couldn't help but fear for Nia even more.

The two rifts opened wider, and two vessels, far larger than the S.G. Dai Gurren, emerged from them.

[This is the despair of your race given physical form, and it will annihilate you.]

"Well that's good for us. We don't know the meaning of despair." Simon replied. "Aretenborough!"

"Oh yeah! You got it!" was the response from the team's resident muppet, as he smashed his controls. Must have worked too, because literally every gun and missile pod on the ship fired in one ungodly salvo.

Sadly, as cool as it looked, every single shot was met by a barrier that allowed the Anti-Spiral ships to completely ignore the barrage.

"That is one tough shield." Kittan said.

"You don't know the half of it Kittan," I replied, "If I had to make a comparison, comparing the shields on those ships with the ones on a standard Mugann would be like a thick sheet of steel compared to a piece of toilet paper."

"Then there's only one thing to do." Simon replied. "Viral, we're up!"

"Alright." He replied, as the two teleported to the platform in front of their unit.

"OK you bozos listen up!" Kittan shouted, "It's time for one last brawl! I don't wanna see anyone holding anything back, ya hear me?"

We all voiced our agreement and every single available Gunmen was launched.

The last skirmish with the Anti-Spiral had begun.

Wha… That was… *How the hell* does Simon do this every Loop?!

To sum up how things went, we were kicking all kinds of ass for the first 10 minutes or so. The Anti-Spiral fighters were really slow and went down real easy, and while they had a stupidly high numbers advantage, we had quality over their quantity.

Or so we thought.

Since the Space Knight Baron and the Arc Gurren Lagann were having difficulty piercing through the shields on the carrier ships, Simon and Viral returned to the S.G Dai-Gurren to provide the Spiral Energy needed for transforming the ship into its humanoid mode.

That was when the Anti-Spiral units suddenly turned things around and wrought all kinds of hell. From huge missiles being teleported towards our ship, to the smaller fighters swiftly taking out all but Gimmy and Darry's Grapearls, as well as a few of our more veteran members.

Jorgen, Ballinbow, Kid, Iraak, Makken, Zorthy… I can't believe that you're gone.

That left us with a whopping seven Gunmen Pilots, the head of Lordgenome, Dayakka, Leite, and the bridge crew. All in all, we were probably barely at 14 to 15 people and only four Space Gunmen… well… actually more like three and a half. My Space Knight Baron wound up losing both legs during the retreat.

Of course, there was also the fact that the S.G Dai-Gurren was being dragged into what could only be described as a Space Ocean of Despair, one that was gradually absorbing any and all Spiral Energy that was being put into the ship's engines. That being said, I realised that this was what Simon had meant by the right chance, and did take advantage of the opportunity to pocket the regular size Knight Baron at the very least, thanks to the subspace generator I had, so I was at least taking a souvenir with me.

This was an uphill struggle, and I had no idea what would happen next…

This Loop was fun, once! Why'd it suddenly go to hell like this?

Kittan… DAMMIT!

Ok… so I'm back on the bridge, and dear lord this Super Galaxy Gurren Lagann is ridiculous! Seriously, every point in time and space at once?

How are we not in Eiken?

It doesn't matter now though. Don't worry Nia, we're coming…

Another day, another struggle with this damn Time Machine.

Seriously, me and Bentley can get a time warp going, that much is clear, but for some reason it just won't stabilise.

Although this was a pretty calm Variant. For one, it was a Stealth Anchor Loop, so Sly wasn't Awake this time around (It feels so strange.) The other major difference though when this Loop is compared to the baseline: No Clockwerk. He simply never existed in the first place here.

So while it meant that Sly was out thieving with his siblings (A pair of younger sisters), that left me and Bentley as the two active Loopers in this iteration.

"I've gotta say Penelope, this 'Gunmen' that you mentioned sounds positively fascinating. How'd you fit it in your Pocket?" Bentley asked as I adjusted the controls a little.

"Subspace Generator. Got it that one time we Looped in as Maximals." I said as I saw the problem. It was… a Core Drill? "Funny, this Loop's a Baseline Abilities only one isn't it?"

"Yeah, it is. Why?" Bentley asked.

"Because I've just found this in the controls. It should be in my Pocket, but-"

"Penelope? You aren't holding anything." Bentley interrupted.

Something was wrong.

"So, you're catching on now, aren't you?"

I hadn't heard that voice in a long time. As I turned around, there was a raccoon dressed up like Kamina, glasses and all.

"Kamina? You're here?"

"Yep. So this is your Loop, huh? Got to say, I didn't think you were normally a mouse." Kamina replied.

"You're Awake? But, you weren't when you died." I said,

"You're half right. I wasn't, at least I wasn't before Thymilph's spear went right through me. I tell ya, it really does suck to start of a Loop from the point where you're impaled on a spear."

I cringed at that thought.

"Turns out I had just long enough to process the Loop Memories before I needed to deal the finishing blow, so I could tell that you were Awake, since I got two Pings and one of them was Simon. But we don't have much time so I'll make things quick. Right now, you're still on the Super Galaxy Gurren Lagann."

"But that doesn't make sense!" I replied. I looked around, but Bentley had disappeared for some reason. "The Loop ended, and I ended up here."

"That's because the Anti-Spirals use some weird dream world maze-type thing. Traps your mind in some kind of dream-world. Sometimes it's an ideal one, other times not so much. Sometimes for a Looper it makes things seem like they've moved onto the next Loop. Simon's gone through it enough times to catch on and break the illusion rather quickly, but for those that aren't used to it, that's where I come in. My last act during a Loop where I die is to give you guys a helping hand to get yourselves out of this place and back to the battle." Kamina explained, pointing to the Core Drill. "That right there is your ticket out of here."

"But I don't know what to do with this to break the spell."

"They've managed it." Kamina said, gesturing to the window behind him. I walked over a looked out of it, and there was a line of green shooting stars in the sky. The Core Drill in my hand pulsed, and a green light began to surround me. "Ya just have to focus on leaving the dream-world and will yourself back with all your strength. Simple as that."

"Will myself back, huh?" I replied, smiling. "Well that's something I can do. Hope to meet you again sometime Kamina."

"Same here, Penelope. See you around."

As we bid farewell to each other, the light completely covered me and I took off into the sky.

Time to finish this once and for all.

"I've come, Nia. Just like I promised." Simon said as he was reunited his fiancé.

It was at that point that the rest of us arrived on the scene, taking our positions for maximum effect. It was a little weird having your legs surrounded by a drill, but we shouldn't be there for much longer.

[Impossible! No intelligent life forms can escape the Alternate Reality Labyrinth!]

"Well you should never underestimate us!" Simon shouted. "Whether it's time, space, or other realities, that kind of obstacle means nothing to us. We'll pierce through the methods you choose and form our own path! That's who we are, Team Dai-Gurren!"

We shot into the air and rocketed towards the Gurren Lagann, which had shifted into its Arc Form and then its Super Galaxy form. As our drills flew towards the Super Galaxy Gurren Lagann, everything went white for a moment. Once everything had cleared, I was sat in a Lagann cockpit.

It was then that I heard Nia.

"Even if we were to be enslaved by the galaxy's cycle of rebirth…"

"The feelings that were left behind will open the door!" Yoko added. My turn.

"Even if the endless universe was to go against us…"

"Our burning blood will cut through fate!" Viral finished.

"We'll break through the heavens and any dimensions that stand in our way!" Simon called, as every one of us joined in the next part.

"WE'LL SHOW YOU OUR PATH THROUGH FORCE!"

"Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagann!" Simon declared.

" **JUST WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK WE ARE!"**

To say the battle was intense would be doing it an injustice. We'd each gotten a chance to shine during that battle, from Aretenborough getting to use PROBABILITY-ALTERING MISSILES (he insisted on using that volume no matter what the tone was should that kind of weapon get brought up), Yoko's sharpshooting hitting the Anti-Spiral homeworld on their robot's crown, to Viral's swordplay and my drill-whips. The Anti-Spiral King ended up throwing a Big Bang at us and we practically ate it, thanks to Lordgenome sacrificing himself. As much as I hated losing team members in this Loop, we all knew the body was temporary at best, so he did what he could and went down a hero for his efforts.

Hell, even the ending to this brawl was insane. The Tengen Toppa was trashed so the Super Galaxy emerged and charged towards the Anti-Spiral King. When it went down, it spat out the Arc, which let the original Gurren Lagann out when it went down, and even then, Viral had to throw the Lagann to get Simon to the Anti-Spiral King.

When it all ended though, we returned to normal space, everyone safely sat within an inactive Lagann. Minutes later we were rescued, and we returned to Earth victorious.

Simon and Nia's wedding was frankly just plain beautiful. After all, we had crossed the universe just so we could rescue her, so seeing

the two of them actually getting to have their wedding was a real treat.

Sadly, a couple of days later, Nia passed away, her body had taken too much damage from being broken down and scanned by the Anti-Spiral, so she was already growing weaker once she walked down the aisle. According to Simon, it was better than the baseline version, where it broke down at the altar. This time though she was able to pass on peacefully, surrounded by the remaining members of the team, while we all helped her to leave this world with a smile on her face.

The next day, Simon and I were sat in his home, sharing one last drink before the end of the Loop.

"So how long do we have until the end?" I asked; my Core Drill now sat around my neck.

"It varies, but when Nia's not Awake for a Loop, her death is the last major event, so it's probably about a week at most before we part ways." Simon replied. "So tell me, what did you think of the whole adventure?"

"Well now that I know what to expect, it'll be fun to see how we can change things around next time." I replied, "But I'm going to say this right out. This. Loop. Is. Insane."

"Well once you live it enough times, you get used to some of the oddities. Heck, Kamina can't keep himself from derailing most Loops when he's Awake. I tell ya, Lordgenome's face is priceless when Kamina whips out an Arc Gurren Lagann to fight Teppelin, and that's just the tip of the iceberg."

"Seeing something like that would be pretty epic. By the way, if you meet another Looper from my home-Loop, a guy that calls himself 'The Murray', be ready for a lot of repair time. The guy's insurance

premiums are so big back home he had to switch from normal racing to Demolition Derby, which he's undefeated in, by the way."

"Sounds like he'd really get along with the team. " Simon said. "Anyway, I'd best be getting ready to go. I normally end a baseline Loop heading out to fulfil Nia's dream. A world full of flowers."

"Sounds nice." I said, "I hope everything goes well for you."

We finished our drinks and said goodbye to one another. Three days after Simon left Kamina City, the Loop came to an end and I was back in Holland, a mouse once again.

"So, did the guy I replaced join the gang while I was away?" I asked Bentley after we'd met up. I'd taken to wearing my Core Drill around the hideout. It looked good on me.

"Yes, and he creeped me out." Bentley replied, "You know how you and me got together in the baseline?"

"Yes, but I'd like to hope that we're together in the Loops too." I replied.

"Well he kept flirting with me the entire Loop." Bentley explained, "Only when it got to the showdown with LeFwee, he told me that he was just messing with me the entire time. Explains why Sly tried to stop himself from cracking up whenever Leeron started flirting though. Sly was in on the prank."

I couldn't help but giggle at that.

"Anyway Bentley, you should see what I built during that Loop. Let's find somewhere remote so I can show you…"

This was my pet project during September. To be honest, I'm glad this Loop is completed, because now I can move onto

other scenarios for Sly and the Gang.

Just don't expect many of them to be Fused Loops for a while. Methinks I'll be focusing primarily on some of the other Loopers, since Sly and Carmelita get a lot of attention.

That said, see you next time with a proper compilation!

Compilation Set 7

So yeah, this one's been on the backburner for a while. The thread actually went dormant for a little bit because people stopped posting.

That being said though, we're back and here's another set for you all!

7.1 (Xomniac)

Neyla hummed idly to herself as she strode through the innards of the command blimp. So far, it was an average Loop, though with a few key differences: Arpeggio had gotten the Clockwerk parts, as per the norm due to Sly thinking it best to let things run as normal in order to keep in practice, and the Cooper Gang, last she'd checked, had managed to put Bison's industrial rampage to an end. Always a plus, the outdated behemoth tended to reek of blood and sweaty fur.

However, this time around, Arpeggio had somehow managed to be ahead of schedule, meaning that he'd acquired the Aurora Borealis battery *before* Cooper and his comrades could get into it.

Still, no matter. Upon noticing the distinct lack of guards going AWOL, Neyla had started looping a message on the aerial fortress's radio on a private frequency. A distress beacon so that Carmelita would be able to fly the gang to her location.

'Not that there'll be anything left by the time I'm done with this place...' She mentally snarled as she cast a venomous glare up at Clockwerk's lifeless hanging corpse. *'Go ahead and look ugly all you want, you wanker. You'll be sleeping in the Puerto Rico Trench by the end of the day if I have anything to say about it...'* She refocused

her attention on the blimp's cockpit. *'Just need to handle* one *loose end first.'*

Neyla halted just outside the glass doors, taking a moment to breathe deeply as she prepared herself before pressing her palm into the reinforced door's handle and signalling it to open.

Currently, the bird of the hour had his automated perch's back turned to her. Arpeggio's attention was focused on a sheaf of papers he held in his feathers as he sifted through them in an absent-minded fashion.

Noticing her entering, the parrot glanced over his shoulder, giving Neyla a disinterested look. "Ah, Neyla, my dear. There you are. I've been expecting you," He greeted casually.

The tigress's instincts suddenly blared on full alert, and it took all of her concentration to keep any tension from showing in her body language. Something was off. She didn't know what or why, but something was far from right about this situation, and she did *not* like it.

Nevertheless, she had no choice. Swallowing her pride, Neyla displayed her normal cocky, nigh blood-thirsty grin. "Everything's gone perfectly according to plan, Arpeggio. I've got Interpol convinced that they can find us by sweeping through South African airspace. The idjits won't even know what hit them. I'd say it's about time we get phase two underway."

Arpeggio hummed quietly, idly nodding in agreement. "Yes yes, I agree with you there. Let us begin. Oswald, if you would be so kind?"

Neyla blinked in confusion. *'Wait... Oswald? Isn't that one of his-?'*

THWACK!

"Guards..." Neyla wheezed. Stars swam in front of her eyes as a result of a blow to the back of her head that had thrown her to the ground.

Before she could react, or even *attempt* to bring regain her balance, heavy feathered hands all but crushed her shoulders, hauling her to her feet.

Neyla attempted to reach for her whip...

CLUNK!

When she heard and felt the disheartening effects of Interpol's maximum-security handcuffs closing around her hands.

The same handcuffs that were made of titanium and extended all the way up to her elbow.

Neyla attempted to reach for her Vigors, *any* of her Vigors... and ended up hissing in pain as her batch of Devil's Kiss merely managed to heat the insides of the restraints to uncomfortable levels. *'Shit shit shit shit sh-!'*

"I must say, Neyla..."

The constable's head tilted up painfully at Arpeggio's voice. The bird still refused to turn, instead continuing to pore over the papers he was holding. "You had me going for quite some time, I will admit. But honestly now..." He directed his perch to tilt just a bit, allowing the parrot to cast a languid yet nevertheless baleful glance at her with the side of his head. "You were *my* apprentice. Did you truly delude yourself into believing that you could eventually surpass *me?"* He shook his head as he let out a light, amused chuckle. "Honestly, the very idea!"

"A-Arpeggio..." Neyla groaned. "W-what the bloody hell are you talking about!?"

Arpeggio gave her a mildly irritated look before looking over her shoulder and waving a wing casually.

THUNK!

"ARGH!" Neyla cried out in pain, doubling over as the massive toucan behind her buried his fist in her stomach.

"Please, my dear, do me a favour, would you?" Arpeggio asked kindly, prompting his perch forwards. He stopped inches away from Neyla, and used one of his wings to lift her chin up so that she was forced to stare into his sad eyes. "Don't insult me in your final moments. For once, let's be honest: you've been preparing to betray me."

"N-no... that's not true..." Neyla groaned.

Arpeggio sighed tiredly, moving his perch away and setting it to pace back and forth. "Ah, but you see... it is. Allow me to explain: A scant few months ago, right around the time when you began moving with autonomy, I felt a... premonition of sorts. Nothing serious, mind you, just an old animal instinct warning me of danger. Most would simply dismiss such trivial inklings as unreliable and pointless. But not I!" Arpeggio leaned his head back and let out an amused chuckle. "No, not I. I have learned to rely on my instincts, and as such decided to seek out professional aid. It cost me many a favour, but I eventually managed to bribe my way into Heathrow Prison, so that I might make contact with one of the inmates. Perhaps you've heard of her, a Mz Ruby?"

Neyla's mouth ran dry as she began to piece things together.

"Oh she was reluctant at first, yes, but I eventually managed to... 'persuade' her into describing to me what the future held in store." He halted his perch, turning it so that he was fully facing Neyla. "Imagine my disappointment when I discovered that my apprentice, my very own *protégé* held plans to assassinate me, and steal my marvellous goal out from beneath me. So, tell me, before I have you

thrown out into the abyss..." Arpeggio tilted his head curiously. "What made you betray me? Greed? Lust for power? Were my designs simply of too small a scale for you to appreciate?"

Neyla growled under her breath, her thoughts finally stable enough for her to answer. "Try *common sense* you arse-brained dodo!" She snarled furiously.

Arpeggio raised an eyebrow at her outburst. "Would you care to elaborate?"

"Read my lips, dimwit!" The constable demanded. "Clockwerk. Is. *Evil!* For God's sake, man, have you even *read* his file?! His blueprints!? The bloody bastard runs on *hatred!* Who gives a damn if he's immortal, he's a complete psychopath! And you want to stick your *brain* in there!? How daft are you!? He'll shred your mind like a piece of bloody tissue paper! *Listen to me,* Arpeggio! If you have any, *any* sense of self-preservation, then you'll shred every last one of those parts, here and now, and toss them to the ends of the earth!" Neyla huffed tiredly for a second before looking Arpeggio in the eye with true and honest desperation. "Please... if my apprenticeship ever meant anything to you, then *please* listen to me."

For a long time, Arpeggio stared at her apathetically. Slowly, he prompted his perch forwards, rolling it past Neyla and the guard and out the door, halting on the ramp as he stared up at the demonic owl contemplatively.

Finally, he sighed heavily, removing his monocle from his eye and slowly wiping it down with a handkerchief he drew from his pocket. "You... are correct." He stated morosely. "I have been foolish: blinded by my ambitions, I have strayed from the path of science and unto the road of obsession. No... it is decided: I shall *not* place my mind within Clockwerk's body."

Neyla allowed her body to sag in the guard's arms, a sigh of relief escaping her.

"At least..." Arpeggio replaced his monocle, giving Neyla a cold, analytical look. "I shall not do so without extensive testing."

Neyla frowned in confusion... before slowly gaping in horror. "No. Nononono *nononoNO!"* She shrieked, struggling desperately in her captor's arms. "NO! You can't do this, Arpeggio; *you can't do this to me!"*

The parrot ignored her, turning his attention to the guard holding her. "Detain her in the holding cells, if you please. I believe that I've devised a proper method for locking the Clockwerk parts together via kinetic energy, so I will require some time to fashion some restraints for the body. Until then, do make sure she doesn't hurt herself, would you?"

The guard grunted in affirmation, frog-marching Neyla towards the blimp's hold. Neyla struggled and thrashed the whole way. "Please, Arpeggio, don't do this to me! Arpeggio, I'm begging you! *Arpeggio! ARPEGGIO!"*

Arpeggio smiled pleasantly as he watched her leave, raising a wing to wave goodbye. "Farewell, Neyla. You were truly my finest apprentice. I regret losing you. Rest assured though. This is nothing personal. It is merely... business."

The only responses he received were Neyla's desperate screams.

7.2

It had been a rather different Loop thus far. Instead of trying to take back the pieces of the Thievious Raccoonus by force, Sly had instead opted to negotiate for their return.

So to start things off, Sly had actually gone after Muggshot's piece first this time. According to this Loop he was much more of a two-faced criminal, running a legitimate casino while having henchmen

commit his crimes from the shadows. Compared to his Baseline counterpart, this version of Muggshot was much more intelligent, albeit with an accent that was just as thick as it was normally.

Thanks to the front, it was actually a lot easier to get into the offices to meet with the boss-bulldog himself.

"So, lemme get this straight. Youse came here to gets yer precious book back?" Muggshot asked.

"Yep."

"An' even thoughs I was one of the guys that whacked yer Pa, yer not here for revenge?"

"Not really."

"…What's yer angle Cooper? I just can't work ya out."

"It's simple really. All I'm after is the piece of my family heirloom that you were given. You've got a good operation going, and as a fellow criminal, I'm pretty impressed that you lasted this long. If we can find a way for me to receive it peacefully, then I'll leave, no tricks, no trouble." Sly explained.

"Now, that plan's got a bit of a problem there. What if I don't wants to return it?"

"You and I both know that everyone has a price, Mr. Muggshot." Sly replied, "So how about this? We gamble for it. Three games, with two wins required. We each suggest three and the ones we use are decided at random. If I win, I get the Thievious Raccoonus section that you have."

"What about if I win?"

"Then I work for you for a year, with my payment at the end being your piece of the book. Either way I walk away with it, but the real prize is that of my freedom for the next year. So Muggshot, do we have a deal?"

7.3 (Masterofgames)

Akamaru, presently in his Kiba shaped Beast-Clone form, pondered the mysteries of the universe as he looked at the guest looper replacing Naruto.

This in itself was not unusual. Ask anyone in Konoha, be they looping or not, and they would tell you that Akamaru was the brains of the pair.

His mind eventually focused back onto the guest, and the odd variances that had come in his wake.

For one thing, Suna had been lording their possession of the Kyuubi over the other villages whenever Suna's slowly dwindling strength was brought up.

For another, the guest clearly had the Ichibi sealed in him. The smell of racoon was nearly overpowering.

Akamaru wasn't sure what to think of him. For one thing, he got away with things on his first try that Naruto would have taken dozens to manage when he was starting out.

Take the forbidden scroll for example. The new guy had outright stolen it, and claimed that it had been destroyed by a stray fire technique fired by Mizuki when the two had fought. And somehow, everyone (who wasn't looping) had believed him. He had to be a top class con artist to get away with that, and Akamaru didn't particularly like con artists.

On the other hand, thanks to the discipline over his own instincts the loops had allowed him to master, Akamaru had been the only dog in Konoha to not chase the replacement Looper on sight, and in gratitude, had been given certain privileges.

Like the forbidden scroll.

"You done with the Ceramic Dragon Cannon yet? I'm ready to switch again."

"Give me a minute. I use paws more often than hands ya' know." Akamaru muttered, trying it again, and managing to get the clay he was testing with to fuse solid in yet another useless shape.

Seriously, hands were weird. Why so many joints in the fingers?

"Well, hurry it up. Someone's going to catch on that I still have this eventually, and I'd like it all mastered by then. Once you finish, I could use some more chakra control tips."

"You're letting me study the scroll whenever I want because I promised I wouldn't rat you out, but why am I playing tour guide to the loop and how it works for you again?"

"I promised to let you help me turn the Chunin Exams into the world's largest fox hunt when Garra goes nuts." Sly reminded him.

"Oh. Right."

7.4 (Kingofsouls)

Being the Anchor of a Loop was a lonely existence. They were doomed to relive every hour of every day. The reward for doing such a thing was getting to do it again.

And again.

And again.

And again.

And only you were aware of it. Forced to leave old friends, and lovers for some, behind again and again only for them to forgive you the only way Yggdrasil allowed them to: By having them pretend it never happened until you meet them again...

Well, the other reward was all the goodies you were able to stick in your Subspace Pocket, but simple objects could not replace the void company can.

Sly Cooper took every moment to enjoy Loops where he wasn't the only one Awake, especially the Loops with Carmelita Awake. Enduring a dozen or so loops where He was without his wife was worth it when he saw her again.

It was an especially rare time for the entire gang to be Awake. They decided to savour the moment, and take a well-deserved vacation.

This required a little bit of derailing first.

In a very short order, the gang had arrested the Fiendish Five, blown up Clockwerk, arrested the Klaww Kang (Minus Dimitri), beaten up Octavio, drove the miners out of the Outback, gave a very well deserved ass whooping to General Tsao, kicked Doctor M off of the Cooper Vault, and to top it off travelled back in time to warn the Cooper Ancestors about Le Paradox after laying some traps for the skunk's troops.

For added amazement, they did it two days faster than the last time they did that.

At the moment, the gang were content with simply lounging at the Paris Hideout. All were present, save for Dimitri. The frogman of the gang had left the hideout and went out and about, saying that he "was bored of the slow, chill sounds of sound so I'm going to the

night club to get some of my special slick sick sweet tunes, crackerbox. Catching you on the flip side Anchor bro."

It was wonder they understood that.

Neyla was stirring a martini, smirking as Murray finished his tale, Sly burying his face in his paws. "You're joking? That really happened?" she asked the racoon.

"Yea, my tail really was made up of rings. And unfortunately it wasn't the last time it happened."

Neyla didn't laugh often. This was an exception. "Oh, I do hope someone took pictures."

"YOU BET!' Murray quickly took a small stack of pictures out of this pocket, Sly scrambling out of his seat trying to steal them from his friend. "Murray, you said you destroyed them all!"

"I lose track of things that aren't food in there. Honest."

"How much food do you have in there?"

"...A lot."

Neyla felt like she belonged, watching Sly and Murray play keep away. She smiled as she observed. "Something on your mind? You have that look."

The Constable turned to notice Carmelita, garbed in her Cooper Clothes, sitting next to her fellow Looper. "I...feel happy."

"That's it?"

"I know it may sound odd you you Inspe- I mean, Carmelita, but ever since I woke up to this...Looping business I have never felt happier in my entire life. The...Clock-La loops not a part of that by the way."

Neyla took a sip of her drink while Carmelita did the same with her coffee. "Before I woke up, I was just a dirty cop, willing to stab everyone in the back to get an illusion of power. And before that, I was a bully in school, stepping on others and made them feel small so I didn't have to. I was so enamoured by the power I had that I never noticed the loneliness of it all."

"And then I was stuck as Clock-La over and over. It was horrible. Sly told me about the time he Woke up as Clockwerk. I share his sentiments. I would wish that on no one."

"The pain… the hatred... it made me realize that I was a fool. An empty lonely hated fool. I lost all I had...to gain nothing in return.

"So... why happy?"

"Because now, I have friends. I have actually friends who want to be with me not because I have a skill or object of value in the moment, but because they want to be my friends. No agendas, no backstabbing, just friendship. For the first time in my life, I belong."

"And I will never give that up for anything."

Carmelita was surprised that Neyla was being so existential. It helped her immensely but this seemed to come out of left field. The Loops could do that do you though, so hopefully this was just a phase.

"But enough about me. What about you? Have you and Sly done anything exciting lately?"

Carmelita ailed to supress a grin. "Well, Sly and I decided to have another wedding one Loop, and we decided to invite Interpol to it."

"You did what?"

"You should have seen everyone's faces. They were having such a hard time understanding us; it was like we'd suddenly started talking

like Dimitri."

"Please tell me you have that recorded."

"You know Bentley." Carmelita said as she took a camera out of her Pocket. "He always has a camera somewhere."

"That is slightly weird." Neyla then shuddered. "It can't be as weird as my last loop."

"What happened?"

"I Woke up younger than usual..." The tiger sighed. "...and I was Rajan's daughter."

"That doesn't sound that weird."

"Trust me, it was."

7.5

"Huh, well, this is new." Sly said to himself as he stood atop a tall tree, looking around. He was in Japan during what appeared to be the Warring States Era, and while he was the sole Awake member of the gang, it turned out that everyone had assumed similar roles to their baseline selves.

For Sly, Bentley and Murray, now known as Kin, Daichi, and Iwao respectively, they were still a trio of thieves, but from what Sly could tell, all of their Loop's residents, both good and evil, were here in various parts of Japan as well.

Of course, the person that was pursuing them was Carmelita, or Noriko, who was still a member of Law Enforcement. What Sly found funny though was that she had to hide her gender from her

superiors. In Loop, the only one who had discovered her secret was Sly himself, even his companions weren't privy to the information.

"I should really let the two of them in on it one of these days." Sly muttered, as his thoughts shifted to the task at hand.

"Kin-san, get down here, we need to brief you about your scouting mission!" Bentley/Daichi called from within the tent that the group was using as a safehouse.

"On my way, Daichi!" Sly called back, this was going to be a rather unique Loop. Hopefully there wasn't a Clockwerk to mess things up. After all, this looked like it would be pretty interesting.

7.6 (Demonicor)

One day, a boy dropped his four pet lizards into the sewer, where they came into contact with radioactive goo, forever changing their lives.

They were taken in by an aging raccoon named Sly who named them and gave them a home, training them in the ways of his own mastery.

Toothless, Spike, Spyro, and Mushu. Together they are the Teenage Mutant Rogue Dragons.

7.7

' *Well great.* ' I thought to myself as I crept through Police HQ. ' *This is going to be a bit of a weird Loop.* '

Everything had seemed normal at first, the only oddity that I'd noticed was that I had Woke up on top of the Police HQ, as opposed

to a couple of days beforehand as per usual. Checking my Loop Memories came up with nothing too different. Murray had come into his 'The Murray' persona earlier than normal, but that had happened plenty of times before, even when he wasn't Awake. There was only one Ping returning when I checked. Whoever they are, they're pretty far off too. Probably either Penelope or Neyla provided we're not hosting any guest Loopers this time around. That's all happened before though.

The real odd part came when Bentley contacted me over the comm-link.

"Sly? Do you read me?"

I didn't say anything. In fact I couldn't say anything.

For some inexplicable reason, I appeared to be mute for this Loop.

"Sly? Do you copy?"

I nodded my head a little.

"Alright then, Inspector Fox's office should be at the end of the corridor..."

I nodded again. This was going to be a strange experience to say the least.

7.8

SCP-2392

Classification: Euclid Safe Euclid

Special Containment Procedures

SCP-2392 is to be stored within Site-17 in a standard humanoid containment cell. Minor adjustments will be made in order to accommodate for differences in physical structure. SCP-2392 is to be fitted with an ankle fitted tracking device.

Provided that SCP-2392 displays consistent good behaviour, access to an exercise facility may be granted, with prior approval required. Sessions are to be 2 hours at most.

Diet has been shown to be consistent with that of a human albeit with a slight preference for meat-products.

SCP-2392-B is to be kept in a sealed display unit within the cell.

Instances of SCP-2392-C are to be removed from cell as soon as possible and used for research purposes.

Description

SCP-2392 is a mammalian being, resembling a male humanoid raccoon, approximately 5'6" in height and an athletic build. Coat is grey with black stripes. SCP-2392 possesses some clothing primary for the upper body, head and feet. Another possession is a wooden cane which he refuses to hand over to personnel. As such, this item has been registered as SCP-2392-B.

SCP-2392 claims to be 18 years of age and is overall cooperative with investigations. He has displayed full understanding of English as well as limited French. He answers to the name "Sly".

SCP-2392 has shown a regular tendency to take items belonging to personnel, but has soon returned most of the items that were taken. Despite comprehensive searches for unreturned goods, the items appear to have vanished completely and have been deemed unrecoverable. SCP-2392 displays no knowledge of how or why certain items seem to be unrecoverable. As such, Euclid classification has been assigned due to potential reality warping

capabilities. Furthermore, any non-essential items are to be kept out of his cell.

Addendum 1: SCP-2392 has repeatedly attempted to mimic accents from various European countries. While British and French have been shown to be workable (albeit somewhat stereotypical), all personnel have agreed that any and all attempts at an Italian accent have failed miserably. SCP-2392 has displayed amusement at the various responses.

Addendum 2: Some items noted as unrecoverable have since been recovered. Further observation is required, but items seem to return approximately 90 days after first being marked as unrecoverable. SCP-2392 has shown no knowledge of means regarding how various items have been recovered. Closer observation is recommended. Returning items are to be marked as an instance of SCP-2392-C.

7.9 (Evilhumor)

Sly blinked as he Woke up in in a plane with gunfire ringing in his ear. Flying to the side to avoid the incoming plane, his loop memories told him that it happened again.

With a sigh, Otto Von Cooper went back into the dogfight.

7.10 (Evilhumor)

"So you two wish to be proper thieves, right?" Sly looked at the two sitting on the couch in their hideout, with Murray and Bentley smirking behind him with Carmelita barely holding back her laughter.

The two looked at each before nodding.

"Just one thing, before I teach you *anything* , you promise me that your moms *won't* skin me for this?" Sly asked in a seriously scared voice.

They both nodded their heads at this.

"Good," Sly smiled at the winged unicorn and wolf sitting next to each other. "Now Nyx, Leman, you want to learn how to steal cookies without getting caught?" Sly smiled at the two kids, sitting down in front of them while rubbing his paws together. "Let's begin with the basics, shall we?"

7.11 (Hvulpes)

Sly took great care not to be followed as he headed to a secret personal vault of his. Inside he had hidden the greatest treasure he had stolen, once he had never been noticed steal. Even he hadn't known that he had stolen it at first.

Sneaking pass all of the traps and alarms, he came to the safe and entered the combination.

Inside were pictures of one Inspector Carmelita Fox-Cooper.

The greatest theft Sly Cooper ever committed was stealing of the heart of Carmelita Fox.

7.12

"So normally there's a whole slew of Runaway Spirits that enter the human world?" Sly asked, looking at his host for the Loop, one Keima Katsuragi, as the two of them sat outside in front of Maijima High.

"That's right. Normally I have to conquer a large number of women as part of a single Loop." Keima replied, not once looking up from his PFP. "Thankfully however, there are a much smaller number of spirits that escaped this time around so the number of women I have to conquer should have gone down. According to Elsie however, one has taken up residence in this Loop's iteration of your currently Sleeping wife."

"Right. How do we get it out of her?" Sly replied.

"We? Don't forget Sly, she's *your* wife. Therefore, this is *your* conquest."

"OK, tell me how I 'conquer' her then." Sly asked ' *No wonder this guy's the only Looper in this Branch. He's kind of a jerk.* '

"It's simple. A Runaway Spirit hides in the heart of a girl, hoping to eventually be born again as a human. It hides in the gaps in said heart. The only way to force it out is to get the host to fill that same gap with someone else." Keima explained. "In this case, that means that you have to get her to fall in love with you."

There was a tense silence in the air for a brief moment.

"I'm sorry. I didn't quite catch that." Sly replied, "So right now, the fate of… whatever is at stake here, rests on whether or not I can get a Sleeping, high-school girl version of my wife to fall in love with me?"

"That's right." Keima replied, getting up. "By the way, this kind of situation has happened before. You may want to be ready for her Waking up once the conquest is complete. Goodbye for now." He added, walking off.

Sly leant back, looking up at the clouds in the sky.

' *Right then Sly,* ' He thought to himself, ' *time to steal Carmelita's heart all over again.* '

A nervous look appeared on his face after a moment or two.

' *The catch is though, where do I begin?* '

There we go. This one was a long time coming.

7.1: I'm going to let Xomniac handle this one. This was what he put at the end of this submission.

Arpeggio. The foot-tall parrot that bit it at the start of the final chapter. That's all anyone remembers. Allow me to lay out the facts: That 'pathetic' parrot managed to construct a gigantic mobile aerial fortress by using Da Vinci's designs as a basis. That 'feeble' parrot didn't just work alongside the duplicitous Dimitri, the regal Rajan, the manipulative Contessa, and the dauntless Jean-Bison: he led them. He founded the massive spice empire known as the Klaww Gang, and despite everyone around him being bigger and stronger, he kept himself in charge. He put himself on the top of the underworld and he stayed there. You don't just accomplish that by being smarter than everyone: you accomplish that by being the scariest, darkest, most ruthless cold-hearted S.O.B. to ever walk the Earth. That's who Arpeggio is. And if you forget it? Too bad. Just don't complain when you're slowly buried alive in wet concrete.

7.2: Because sometimes you just can't be bothered with the normal violence.

7.3: At the end of Set 6, we saw Sly using Ninjutsu. I like to think that this is the Loop that he got those skills.

7.4: A nice bit of character building from KingofSouls.

7.5: Sly Cooper in the Warring States. Hmm.

7.6: The thread had actually dried up when this one came in. Thanks Demonicor!

7.7: Sly must know how Link feels most of the time now.

7.8: No matter what form he takes or where he ends up, Sly will always have a horrible Italian accent.

7.9: Evilhumor gave us something we could explore a little. Sly replacing his ancestors. Hmm…

7.10: Because cookie stealing is apparently serious business, to the point where consulting a professional thief is a viable planning option. Hmm.

7.11: Happy Valentine's Day!

7.12: Here's a Valentine snippet of my own.

Compilation Set 8

For Sly and Murray, it had been a rather different Loop. After all, it was rare that out of the whole Looping Gang, that it was just the two of them representing their Loop.

Admittedly though, this was a new Loop for the both of them. Sly had replaced Ratchet (even taking on a Lombax version of his normal appearance) while Murray had become a robotic version of himself.

"So, you guys here for the Hovercar Demolition Derby?" The Rilgarian Promoter asked, "If you win, you get a Platinum Turbo Unit presented to you by Captain Qwark himself."

"Hovercar Demolition Derby?" Murray asked, his eyepieces lighting up. Unlike Sly, who had Awakened on Veldin where he had met Clank, Murray had Awakened on Kerwan, which meant that he had yet to hear about this.

"Are there any restrictions for entering?" Clank asked the promoter.

"Only that one person can be in the hovercar during the festivities. So, you wanna sign up?" The promoter replied, "Legal requirements and all that. You've got to sign a waiver too, to say that you're doing this of your own volition and that you can't sue the folks running the event in the case of any major injuries."

"Murray, it's all yours buddy." Sly said, standing aside to let the hippo-esque robot take the spotlight.

"Thanks Sly. Time for The Murray to show just why he's the Undefeated Demolition Derby Champ back home!"

Once Murray had been taken to the hovercar that was originally set for Skid, it had given Sly and Clank a chance to chat.

"So, anything we need to be aware of beforehand?" Sly asked.

"Well for one, Captain Qwark is actually working *with* Chairman Drek." Clank replied, "Falling head first into one of Qwark's traps is not my proudest moment."

"Was it before you caught on to the Loops?" Sly asked, the nod from the diminutive robot that had become his impromptu backpack confirmed it. "Then don't worry about it. We all make stupid mistakes from time to time when we don't know what's coming."

"May I ask what sort of mistakes did you make before you started Looping?" Clank asked.

"Well, believing that the baseline, non-Looping Neyla was an ally, that's one. I can't stress this part enough though. That was before she started Looping too. Now that she's Looping though she's become a real member of the gang, albeit still a bit jumpy around robots and cyborgs." Sly replied, "Last I heard; she's still not on very good terms with Skynet. Bender gets a kick out of it though."

"I see." Clank replied.

"Now that aside, these Gold Bolts we have, they're not essential for anything, are they?"

"Aside from using them to acquire Gold Weapons on Novalis, not to my knowledge." Clank said, noting the sigh of relief from Sly. "Ratchet does take time out to collect them from time to time, but that was during his early Loops. Nowadays he tries to devise new and… um… 'interesting' avenues for his inventions."

"Any standouts?" Sly asked.

"Well a baseline example is the Electro-Shock Undergarments that he created." Clank replied, "He called it 'Stunderwear'. Surprisingly it sold rather well on Umbris. Then there was the time he tried to turn the Rift Inducer into a cleaning tool." He added, shuddering at the memory.

"Well don't worry; I'll try to keep any inventing to a minimum." Sly said, grinning. "By the way, you wouldn't mind if I took some stuff with me when the Loop ends, would you?"

"Gifts for the Loopers in your home branch?" Clank asked.

"That's right." Sly replied, "After all, it seems like this Loop's going to be good for gifts."

At that point, the crowd cheered.

"AND THE WINNER IS MURRAY!"

"Come on Clank, let's go congratulate Murray." Sly said, getting up.

"Right behind you, Sly." Clank replied, following suit.

"So, any plans for this Loop, Cooper?" Neyla asked as she looked at the group that had gathered in the hideout's training area. Sly and Murray had stood side by side on one side of the room while Neyla, Bentley, Carmelita, Penelope and Dimitri were sat on chairs in front of them. On the other side of the room was a group of training dummies that Sly had prepared beforehand.

"Nope. We're here for something else. Murray and I had a Fused Loop over in the Ratchet and Clank Loop. Didn't we Murray?" Sly said.

"Yeah, and we brought gifts for everyone!" Murray shouted, pulling some stuff out of his Pocket while Sly did the same.

When they were finished, there was a pile of weaponry, gadgets and a bunch of odd computers on the floor behind Sly and Murray. Both of them had a booklet in their hands.

"We also got hold of the relevant weapon vendors for each provider, namely Gadgetron, Megacorp, Dreadzone and Grummelnet. Most of them have a clerk of some description, but Clank said they have an automatic mode as well. " Sly said. "Would you two mind trying to switch the settings later?" He added, looking at Bentley and Penelope.

"Sure Sly." Penelope replied.

"Yeah, shouldn't be too hard." Bentley replied. "I think I've got some Starfleet-style Replicator tech in my Pocket, so we should be able to get them working for free too."

"Come on already! Get to the goods!" Dimitri shouted impatiently.

"Alright then." Sly said, "Starting off, here's what we got for you Bentley."

He reached into the pile and pulled out what looked like a space-age crossbow.

"It's called the Plasma Striker!" Murray said as he searched through his booklet. "Here we go. It looks like a hi-tech crossbow, but not only does it fire plasma blasts, the scope has zoom functions and shows weak points on the target!"

"Not bad, wonder how the Clockwerk parts would hold up to a good plasma blast." Neyla said.

"I'm guessing the dummies over there are for us to try these out?" Bentley asked.

"That's right." Sly said, "Give it a try."

"Alright then." Bentley said, looking through the scope and taking aim. Pulling the trigger, a beam of energy shot out and pierced through the dummy's neck.

What they hadn't expected though was that the blast hadn't been fully blocked by the dummy, and there was now a burn mark on the wall with a small hole in the middle of it.

"…We're going to need to set up a better testing site." Sly said.

(Wildrook)

"Pray that one of us goes to the Marvel-Verse and finds enough Vibranium to do the job." Bentley agreed.

8.3

"You tried to force Jing King into marrying you. Did you ever stop to see what she thought about that?" Sly asked as he faced General Tsao in the Bamboo Thicket near his stronghold.

"She is a woman! She doesn't know up from down!" The General replied, "Besides, uniting our two bloodlines would give me unparalleled political power! I would be a fool not to do this! What do you say about that, 'Wedding Photographer'?"

"Well… I've got nothing, but I'll tell you one thing." Sly said, turning the black-hearted fowl around. "I figure the three of them *would* have something to say about that."

Stood in front of the two men were Carmelita, Neyla and Penelope, each readying a different weapon. Carmelita was preparing to fire the weapon Sly and Murray had picked up for her in the Ratchet Loop: the Mag-Net Cannon. Neyla meanwhile had ready to use the Undertow Vigor while Penelope was stood with her arms crossed in the cockpit of the Knight Baron.

"General Tsao, you're under arrest for kidnapping and intent to carry out a forced marriage. If you resist arrest, we will be no choice but to use force." Carmelita said to the somewhat nervous looking rooster.

"I'll just leave you four alone." Sly grinned, walking away.

8.4

"So Sly, what're our plans for this Loop?" Neyla asked.

"Not sure. Carmelita's not Awake this Loop, so we're probably going to have to deal with her trying to arrest me." Sly said.

Suddenly Sly's Binoc-U-Com started to beep.

"Everything alright Bentley?"

"S-SLY! NEYLA! There's someone on the roof with you!" Bentley shouted.

"I guess I've been spotted then."

Sly and Neyla turned around…

…and were face to face with a well-endowed cat that happened to be dressed as a cheerleader, pom-poms and all.

"Sly. Neyla. My name is Themis, I'm your Admin."

"Our Admin's a busty cheerleader?" Sly asked, intrigued.

"Down Sly, you're married." Neyla said, "But he's right, you look like you stepped right out of Eiken."

"...It's a long story. Can we discuss this back at the hideout?" Themis replied. "It's rather cold out here and my back is killing me."

Later, at the Hideout…

"Allow me to explain what's been going on and it'll show why I'm like this." Themis said, "You're aware of the Mass Effect Loop, correct?"

"We had Garrus and an Unawake EDI here a few times; Carmelita and Bentley have been there." Sly replied. "Why, what about it?"

"Well their original Admin, Ares, enabled Sovereign for Looping for the no real reason whatsoever." Themis explained.

"SOVEREIGN'S LOOPING?!" Bentley shouted, "Shepard never mentioned that."

"Erm, how bad is that, Bentley?" Murray asked, unsure.

"Imagine if someone worse than Clockwerk was Looping." Bentley said flatly. Everyone in the room felt a chill down their spine.

"He is Looping, but thankfully he's calmed down a fair bit." Themis said, "Although that didn't stop him from almost Ascending at first. The thing is, after that, Ares was removed from Mass Effect and moved onto a start-up attempt. Have any of you heard of I Wanna Be The Guy?"

Everyone looked at each other before shaking their heads.

"Imagine a platformer game that is so difficult, that when the producer found out that someone had beaten it on the highest difficulty, their response was 'You're not serious, are you?'" Themis explained. "From death traps that appear out of nowhere, pixel perfect platforming as the norm, and all manner of other tricks to increase the difficulty. The only differences present between the various difficulty settings are how many checkpoints are available, with the highest difficulty receiving none."

"That sounds downright brutal." Penelope replied, somewhat nervous.

"Well the Anchor, in order to activate the Loop, had to complete a full run of the game on that aptly named 'Impossible' difficulty, with no foreknowledge about what was coming. In essence, a blind run without dying once." Themis said.

"Let me guess, he did it." Sly said.

"Yes. The final attempt could be summed up as around '1 Yggdrasil plus 1 Googolplex'." Themis explained.

As soon as Bentley and Penelope had heard the term 'Googolplex', they immediately froze.

"That's a lot, isn't it?" Murray asked.

"A Googol is 1 followed by 100 zeroes." Bentley replied, still somewhat shocked.

"A Googolplex is 1 followed by a googol zeroes." Penelope added.

"While 1 Yggdrasil is officially noted as being beyond mortal comprehension." Themis finished. "This Loop is infamous among the Admin for the sheer difficulty in getting it going. Even the Original Seven haven't been there yet since there wasn't a usable baseline ready until now, which leads into why I look like this. Many Admin, myself included, had wagers going with each other about when it would actually start Looping.

I had a personal wager with Aphrodite, the Admin for Eiken and professional thorn in Hephaestus' side. If the total attempts reached 2 Yggdrasils, then Aphrodite would have to sub in for an Admin and manage a Loop of my choice for a single run. She would have also had to meet them face to face to explain what was going on using an avatar designed by me. Since she loves the Eiken body shape, I

would have stuck her in a child's body since it would have no curves to speak of.

However, if it started Looping prior to that, then I would have to explain it to my Loopers using an avatar that she designed and I would have to wear this ridiculous costume for a while while I'm at my terminal." Themis added, sighing. "As you can see, she won."

Suddenly a camera flash went off.

"Reference Material for Carmelita." Dimitri said, not that anyone believed him.

"So we could wind up Looping into this new branch then?" Sly asked.

"Possibly. Right now it's still in the beginning stages, so they haven't had a Fused Loop yet. Considering the Baseline is now the Impossible difficulty though, if you do end up there then expect the Loop to crash." Themis said, "Now if you'll excuse me, I've got a second Loop to inform. The folks at Cold Mountain Penitentiary are going to be in for quite the shock…"

8.5

"Been a while since we've had a Loop like this, huh?"

"Yeah, it has. In more ways than one. You as the inspector, me as the thief, and a Rule 63 Loop on top of it." Carlos Fox, thief extraordinaire said as he looked at his other half, Inspector Sylvia Cooper. The two had just Awakened as Carlos had stolen the info on the Fiendish Five.

"Well then, shall we begin the chase?" Sylvia asked, readying her trusty Handcuff Gun.

"Alright then, see if you can keep up, Ringtail!" Carlos smirked as he bolted towards her gang's van.

"And so it starts again." Sylvia said, smiling. "Let's see if I can win this one, Fox."

8.6 (Ryuus2)

Hiccup woke up in an odd way. Nothing was on fire, there was no roaring or shouts of rage and pain, and he couldn't smell even a hint of smoke or fish. He was standing perfectly still staring up at a castle. Just that. Nothing else. It was the weirdest awakening he'd had in a century.

"Huh, we don't normally wake up here, a-hyuk," a familiar voice to his side said. He grinned and turned to meet the welcoming smiles of Goofy, Donald Duck, and Mickey Mouse. "Howdy Hiccup. You just Wake up too?" the dog-man asked.

"Yep. It's been a while since we've all gotten together like this," Hiccup said as he stretched to get the feeling back in his left leg; it always tingled when it came back after the loop reset. He looked up at the castle and surroundings he now recognized as Hollow Bastion from the first stretch of the Kingdom Hearts loops, then frowned as something hit him as off. "Hey, Mickey, what are you doing here? You don't normally show up until the end of this part, right?"

King Mickey Mouse, Keyblade Master and Disney Anchor, just grinned mischievously up at his fellow anchor. "It's a variant loop that pops up every now and then. Check your loop memories for the details."

Hiccup shrugged and did so. It was quite a bit to take in. Berk replaced Destiny Island this loop, except Riku was there as a Viking, and when the Heartless came Astrid was taken as a Princess of Heart and Hiccup became the new Keybearer. Then, while he,

Donald, and Goofy were in Wonderland saving Alice, Maleficent went after Queen Minnie in Disney Castle, prompting Mickey to return from the World of Darkness early instead of trying to close the door to Kingdom Hearts from that end. Agrabah was kind of the same, if everyone was an anthropomorphic animal. Instead of Jasmine and Aladdin, they'd met Princess Carmelita and Sly the street ringtail. Everything else was mostly baseline for Kingdom Hearts, just with a lot more snark.

"Huh. Okay then. I'm guessing all the Princes and Princesses were replaced by Loopers, then?" Mickey nods confirmation. "I wonder who replaced Aurora, Cinderella, Snow White, and Belle?" he asked his comrades.

"My memories tell me that it's Princesses Asami, Cadence, and Rozalin this time," Mickey said. "I have no idea who replaced Belle, but the Beast's human name was-"

Mickey was interrupted by nearby space ripping and tearing with a bestial roar, followed by the more familiar roar of a monstrous engine. A tank sized metal box covered in guns rolled through the kaleidoscopic tear in space. What Hiccup recognized as a Rhino troop transport rolled right up to them and parked. Out of the back climbed a giant wolf-man in grey Space Marine armour, flanked by two wolves half his height...making them as tall at the shoulder as Hiccup.

"-Prince Leman Russ," Mickey finished with aplomb.

"Well met, your majesty," Leman growled formally, sketching a bow that was equal parts graceful and deferent despite all the hair and encumbrance of his armour. "I trust we are all Awake?"

"Yep," Hiccup said. "All of us so far, anyways. Your group?"

"Myself, Freki, and Geri, of course," he said, gesturing to his lupine brothers. "Bjorn is replacing Cogsworth. He and Lumiere are in the

Rhino. We awoke as soon as the Heartless absconded with Nyx. We would have been here sooner, but the traffic was terrible."

"Are you sure it wasn't your driving?" Donald quacked. Everyone snickered as the Primarch growled angrily at the smirking duck.

"For your information, I was not driving. Bjorn wouldn't let me," he grumbled the last part. He waved at the portal he used to get there. "I was talking about them."

Out of the still open warp portal, another group arrived on what most of the Loopers there would call the strangest vehicle they had ever seen. A large blue and green flying carpet...with a steering wheel. Behind the wheel was a pink hippo in a turban with blue pants held up by a red sash. Behind him was a grey raccoon in a blue vest holding a crooked cane, a green turtle wearing a bowtie and a fez, and a tigress in purple pants and crop-top.

The next arrival was a glowing comet. A giant glowing hulk of ice and rock with a tail of fire that was somehow capable of parallel parking between a tank and a carpet. The light quickly dimmed and one wall of the comet fell apart/melted and reformed into a set of stairs. Down the stairs came a very handsome young man in expensively tailored royal blue clothes, with a bearing fit for a prince. The only thing that ruined the very picture of every parent's dream son in law was the very impressive cleavage the "prince" was displaying.

Last to arrive was an ornate crystal carriage driven by two crystal stallions. Out of it stepped yet another young man, in red this time, who was equally as handsome and charming as the last. Except for the chiselled jaw and lack of cleavage, that is. He was also accompanied by two mice, one on each shoulder, wearing matching guard uniforms and light plate armour, with identical swords strapped to their sides. As they stepped towards the group, the carriage and horses slowly lost definition until they faded away completely, their creator no longer applying the focus needed to keep up the elaborate force-fields that comprised them.

Taking in the assembled Loopers around him, Hiccup came to a quick decision. He switched to his favourite Night Fury Keyblade, jumped on the Rhino, and cast a wandless Sonorus on himself. "My friends and fellow Loopers, we have been called together here for a reason. Call it fate, or chance, or Yggdrasil wanting a show, but there is a reason. And that reason...is to prove we are men! And amazons," he added aside when Korra glared and Neyla hissed at him. "But mostly as men! Now what are we waiting for? Let's save our girls! Then rub it in their faces!"

"Yeah!"

8.7 (ToaMataNui5000)

Sly, or more correctly Haruhiko Cooper, woke up humanized in a Japanese style hide-out. A few pings revealed that Dimitri and Murray were also awake. However, they were elsewhere, and apparently an unawake Carmelita was bound to a hospital bed. Their current heist was relating to stealing money from the local yakuza, in order to fund her medical bills.

"Alright Bentley, what do you got for me?" Sly walked in to where his humanized, brainy buddy was looking over building schematics.

"Oh, it'll be simple. Once Murray gets back from scouting, you two will distract the guards. Meanwhile, I'll sneak in, find the vault, and use Trick Room to teleport the money out of the safe and into the van." Bentley Shinonome beamed proudly. "If it ends up going haywire, use your electric PSI to overload the building's power, and we'll use the blackout to escape."

"My what now?" Sly asked in confusion.

Bentley raised his brow, "You've had it ever since our first trip to the future, remember? We were hired by that anonymous phone call to solve some mystery, declined, but went anyway."

' *Must be some new powers exclusive to this world. I bet I can just substitute electrical plasmids'* "Yeah, now I remember. Sorry, so many heist and lack of sleep from worry got to me."

"Yeah, I know. I wouldn't be able to take it if something like that happened to Penelope." The former turtle patted Sly on the back consolingly. Their moment was interrupted by Murray bursting through the doors.

"Guys! Ya gotta get to the hospital, quickly! You won't believe this!" Murray Asaga said in tired gasps that held an undertone of happiness.

Bentley promptly used Trick Box to warp the thieving trio to the hospital roof. Too impatient to use stairs, Sly flipped gravity, ran down the building-side, and jumped through the window leading to Carmelita's room. There he saw his beloved wife, waking up like it was nothing but a long nap. "Morning Ringtail, I see you're feeling loopy, too?"

Sly pulled her into a tight hug and a passionate kiss. "I know I shouldn't be worried, but I couldn't help it." They finally let go after a few minutes. "How did you get healed up?"

"Murray came over and we made amends for some childhood bullying." The two turned to see Ageha leaning against the wall. "And trust me Sly, it's fine to worry. I got a lover and a manor of orphans that have yet to start looping that I'm scared for, so you'll be fine."

"Thanks pal." Sly and Ageha fist-bumped. "Ba-da-la-da-la-da-la!"

"Eh?"

"You'll understand after eventually meeting Baymax and Hiro," Sly chuckled. "So, what do you normally do here? Bentley mentioned something about time travel and special abilities?"

"We prevent the apocalypse, apparently this time around by the sentient meteor Clockwork Ouroboros." Ageha noticed the couple shiver at the name. "But if you wanna do so, I gotta teach you all PSI. Cause no offense, that cane and shock pistol ain't gonna do much. Then again, I lack any outside abilities to test."

"How 'bout I give you a cane to personalize and a copy of the Thievious Raccoonus in return? To try out in your next loops."

"And if it's anything like learning how throw Hadokens or perform magic, I bet we'll all won't mind the training." Carmelita smiled.

"Deal."

Meanwhile, outside the room, Bentley sighed. "Whelp, back to the drawing board."

8.8 (Kingofsouls)

"Sly...?"

"Yeah Neyla?"

"Can you look over there, and tell me what you see?"

Whipping out his Binoc-U-Com, Sly zeroed in at where Neyla was pointing.

"It looks like...Dimitri recreating Saturday Night Fever..."

"Good, I thought was seeing things."

8.9

"Say your prayers, Sly Cooper. Your life is about to end." Clockwerk droned as he circled Sly above the now active Krack-Karov Volcano.

"I don't think so." Sly replied, readying his cane for a very difficult confrontation. Thankfully the Death Ray hadn't started to sink into the lava this time around, so he at least had a place he could land on. Unfortunately this iteration of Clockwerk hadn't unleashed his robot soldiers on the gang during their approach, instead opting to release them a few minutes ago, which meant that everyone else was preoccupied with a battle of their own. "So tell me, you murdered my parents, stole my birth right, but you left me alive. Your Intel was sound, so you have to have known that I had been born. So why leave me alive?"

"I wanted to show the world that without your precious book, the Cooper Clan was nothing." Clockwerk replied. "Evidently, I was mistaken."

"Got that right." Sly said proudly. "After all, it doesn't take the Thievious Raccoonus to make a Cooper into a Master Thief. After all, a Cooper made the book in the first place. Besides, I have a few tricks up my sleeve that no other Cooper had, and I'm going to make good use of them to put an end to you."

"You can try, Cooper. Now then, let us finish this." Clockwerk declared, lifting into the air before diving at Sly. Quickly using his gravity control to get out of the way, Sly watched as Clockwerk crashed into his Death Ray, swiftly reducing it to scrap.

' *…and there goes my most convenient foothold.* ' Sly thought to himself as he quickly brought himself to a halt in mid-air. ' *Good thing I've been keeping this skill sharp. Zero Gravity mode, Stasis Field, Gravity Kick… Looks like I may need them here. Especially considering… 3, 2, 1…* '

As if on cue, Clockwerk rose up from the wreckage, no worse for wear.

"I see… I do recall reading that one of your ancestors had the power to briefly defy gravity, it seems that you have perfected the skill."

"That's right." Sly said, "Thanks to this, I don't need to worry about touching the ground right now. Even better, you can't count your flight as an advantage anymore!"

"It doesn't matter. So you can emulate flight. I still have my armour, my weapons, and many more definitive advantages. As I said, *you will die here* , Cooper." Clockwerk droned, preparing to attack again.

Readying his now Haki-imbued cane, Sly grinned. It was time to start the fight proper.

For Sly and the gang, it had been a bit of an easier Loop. While the Fiendish Five and the Klaww Gang had still been active, Dr. M wasn't a factor this time around. Thankfully, it meant that the Cooper Vault was completely untouched.

Since this had managed to coincide with all of the native Loopers being Awake this time around, it was time to tour the entire vault.

"Alright, anyone got an idea on how we go through this place? Part of the security is an obstacle course that only a Cooper can deal with." Sly said, "While me and Carmelita can control gravity, it's not that suitable for slow travel."

"Well I've not got anything that can work as a utility." Penelope replied.

"Me neither." Bentley agreed.

"All my stuff is built for speed." Murray said, and can't fly.

"Bros, dudes, Dimitri's got this one. " The Lounge Lizard said, pulling a handful of strange locks out of his Pocket.

"I don't see how they'll help us. Dimitri." Bentley said, looking at his colleague with a confused expression.

"Need to open them first!" Dimitri replied, hitting a small button on the side to open the locks, then throwing them into the small antechamber behind them.

As soon as they were a reasonable distance away, the Locks unfurled into Hoverbikes.

"See what I mean? No worries bro."

"B-But how?!" Penelope asked, surprised. "I mean, the unfolding is one thing, but they were palm-sized before, what kind of tech got them to grow to the size of an actual motorcycle?" All Dimitri could do was shrug. "Eh, they just do. Got to make some greasy sweet cakes that Loop though."

"I can only imagine how weird those cakes looked." Bentley replied.

"Best in Zawame City, dude!" Dimitri said proudly. "Had my own shop and everything. Called it 'Charmant'!"

After hearing about Dimitri's escapades in the Kamen Rider Loop, the gang had taken to riding the bikes (which Dimitri called Dandeliners) and had starting looking through the vault.

"I've got to admit Sly, this is phenomenal." Neyla said, amazed at all of the riches that the Cooper Clan had amassed over the years.

"Yeah Ringtail, considering we don't get to look around given everything that happens normally, this is quite the collection." Carmelita agreed. "Admittedly, it's all stolen goods though."

"Come on Carmelita, you know that this stuff is hundreds, maybe even a couple thousand years old. I think we can look the other way on this one." Neyla replied.

"At least you get to see this each Loop Carmelita. Only you and Sly tend to get this far." Penelope said. "That being said, I can't wait to see the Otto Van Cooper section!"

"Hey guys, look at this portrait!" Murray shouted, as he moved up to a picture of Henriette Cooper. Oddly, the picture was her stood with a bird pirate.

When everyone reached Murray, Sly took a closer look at the title.

"It's not… is it?" He asked, quickly pulling out this Loop's copy of the Thievious Raccoonus. Flipping through the pages, he eventually found the right part of the book. "I can't believe it."

"What is it Sly?" Penelope asked, intrigued.

"Get this. Henriette 'One Eye' Cooper. Worked around the early 17th Century. One of her greatest acquisitions was Sinbad's Legendary Goblet, filled with treasure." Sly explained.

"Must be this cup here." Neyla said, having gotten off of her Dandeliner to walk over to a coin filled cup that was on a pedestal. Oddly enough it was right next to a jar of dirt.

"What set Henriette apart from previous generations was the fact that when she first started her thieving career, she wasn't the leader of her own crew. As you guys know, that's not how things normally happen." Sly continued as everyone nodded in agreement. "Instead, she started as the first mate to one Jack Sparrow, who was regarded as one of the greatest pirates ever to sail the seas."

"Wait a minute, are you telling me-" Carmelita started.

"Yeah, and it gets better." Sly said, starting to smile. "Her captain, Jack Sparrow, was also quite the oddball in his own right. Since pirate legend at the time stated that Davy Jones could only set foot on land for one day every 10 years, Jack tried to protect himself by keeping a jar of dirt on hand, that way he had some land with him at

all times. When Henriette left the crew to form a crew of her own, he gave her the jar, which she kept as a reminder of the mad captain that she used to follow."

"Well I've just been doing some digging on this Captain Jack." Penelope said, having pulled out a laptop. "According to the net, his ship was in fact called The Black Pearl, so it can't be a coincidence."

"So he Looped into this world, but he found himself about 400 years before we were born?" Neyla asked. She picked up the jar and turned it over a few times. "Hey Sly, there's a shell in here."

"Really?" Sly asked, "Pass it here for a second."

She handed him the jar and he looked close. "That's a shell alright, but it's no normal shell. It's a Tone Dial."

"Meaning?" Carmelita asked.

"Well for one, it means that Jack's been to the One Piece Loop." Sly explained, "But there could be a message on here as well." Opening the jar and fishing out the Tone Dial (and making sure that it was clean), he pressed the point of the shell and began to play Jack's message.

"I had a jar of dirt, I had a jar of dirt and you've seen what's inside it!" Jack sang happily.

8.11 (Thanatos's Scribe)

Sora grinned as he watched Andy head upstairs with Buzz and Woody in hand, giving the two living toys a wave before they disappeared from sight. It was pretty rare for Sora to have a Loop where he was able to visit the 'Toy World', but it was enjoyable nonetheless.

"Hey, where am I?" He heard a muffled voice cry out. Looking around, Sora saw an unopened purple present sitting inconspicuously under the tree, the present barely in sight. A Ping was his only warning before the present's front burst open, and a purple anthropomorphic hippopotamus landed on his feet.

"Hah!," The hippo exclaimed, his goggles gleaming in the light as he raised his fist up and declared, "No prison can hold *The Murray!* " However, as Sora heard footsteps approach that could only be Andy's mom, he dashed out and dragged the hippo, who could only be a Looper, out from the open and behind a cabinet just before Andy's mother came out from the kitchen.

"What are you-" The hippo began to say, only to stop as Sora sent out a Ping. The two watched in bated breath as the mother walked past the cabinet, and collectively let out a sigh of relief once she was out of sight.

"That was close," Sora said as he wiped his brow, before turning to the Looper and said, "The name's Sora, and it's nice to meet another Looper I haven't met before!"

"Sora, huh?" 'The Murray' murmured, rubbing his chin in thought, "Now where has the Murray heard that name before?" After a few seconds passed, 'The Murray' snapped his fingers and stated, "Oh, yeah! You must've been the one who helped Sly get his Keycane!"

"You know Sly?" Sora said, then grinned, "That must mean that you're Murray! Sly told me about you when I last saw him."

"Well, the Murray is pleased to meet you," Murray said in reply with a grin just as big, before his face contorted in confusion. "However," Murray wondered, "The Murray is uncertain as to how he ended up in that box..."

"Really?" Sora chirped in surprise, "I was hoping that you had an idea."

"I have no solid idea, though the Murray has one theory..." Murray said, his voice trailing off in thought. However, their wondering was soon answered as the radio began to play a song that immediately had Sora chuckling and Murray groaning at the reference:

~I want a hippopotamus for Christmas,

Only a hippopotamus will doooooo~...

8.12 (SeaofFallingStars)

"I gotta thank you Penelope for doing this. It really means a lot to me!" Murray's giddy voice made the gang look over.

"Not a problem Murray, though I couldn't use the Van. It's just too small for what you wanted. I'm glad Carmelita was willing to provide this in its place though." The Dutch mouse was working on a police bus, modified to be a mobile headquarters.

It paid to have a beau on the Force, after all. Penelope was putting her well-earned skills in transformative machinery to use for Murray's odd request.

"What do you even need this for anyway? Last time I checked only Bentley and I had any uses for giant robots." Her shudder changed meaning as Murray gave her a rib-crushing hug.

"Well, we can't let Sly climb Carmelita every time she gets the Mask of Dark Earth on. I had a plan, now you're putting the last stage into action! Besides, out of all of us, who doesn't want a giant robot?" The hippo of destruction was nearing noise pollution levels of loudness.

After all, it's not every day that you have a friend build you a giant robot that's street-legal.

8.1: I was on a bit of a Ratchet and Clank kick when I wrote this one.

8.2: We know what everyone's received, we'll be seeing them over time.

8.3: Had this bouncing around in my head for a long time.

8.4: I was the one who got the ball rolling on that event. Mwa ha ha ha!

8.5: A Rule 63 Loop that's also a Role Swap. Might need to expand on either side of that one.

8.6: The opening of a mass-Fused Loop version of Kingdom Hearts.

8.7: Psyren sounds like an interesting series, but unfortunately it was cancelled. Gah.

8.8: We really have trouble writing for Dimitri.

8.9: Took me getting a Vita to realise that the Gravity Rush powers are deeper than I first thought.

8.10: Thanks to Evilhumour, who gave the suggestion of finding the Jar of Dirt in the Cooper Vault.

8.11: Didn't realise that song was a thing.

8.12: They've got two giant robots now. Huh.